

TRIPOLI AND  
YOUNG ITALY

BY  
CHARLES LAPWORTH

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TRIPOLI AND YOUNG ITALY







VICTOR EMANUEL

KING OF ITALY

# TRIPOLI AND YOUNG ITALY

BY CHARLES LAPWORTH  
IN COLLABORATION WITH  
MISS HELEN ZIMMERN



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## PREFACE

I N offering this little contribution to the controversy about Italy I want to say that it is not written for the gentlemen in *haute politique*, who generally have their own pet theories ; it is written for just the ordinary, common folk who are supposed to make up that intangible but forceful element known as public opinion. . Most people, if they are candid, will confess that they have only the vaguest ideas about Italy and her problems ; and I have sought, as far as I have been able in the short time at my disposal, to give as comprehensively as possible the case for Italy in regard to her Tripoli campaign, together with some impression of what I may call the *urge* of the new spirit which has been awakened, and is universally apparent in Italy of to-day. I have also tried to show something of what Tripoli means to Italy, not only as a colony, but as an indication of her determination



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to count for something in international affairs, and to prevent herself from being hemmed in and stifled by other contending Powers.

I wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance I have received from Miss Helen Zimmern, whose intimate knowledge of Italy and things Italian, accumulated during twenty-five years' residence here, has been wholly at my service. Her affection for her adopted country is boundless, and is widely appreciated throughout intellectual circles in Italy. She is especially responsible for the chapter on art and literature.

To General Caneva, the Governor of Libya, I wish to express my thanks for giving me all the privileges of an accredited war-correspondent, and I acknowledge the kindness of Major Ropolo and Captain Caragiola of the General Staff; of Major Carlo Zunini and the Infantry and Artillery officers who made me their guest one memorable night in the advanced trenches; and generally of the many officers and men who rendered me services, and with the utmost goodwill but sincere anxiety pursued me with inquiries about the apparently hostile attitude of some of

the British people. I was particularly impressed by the unbounded enthusiasm and undoubted efficiency of the Italian soldiers. A remarkable feature was the genuine *camaraderie* existing between officers and men, which, however, did not impair discipline when there was work to be done. The average officer appears to know all about the family affairs, the mothers, the wives, and the *bambini* of his men; and it is no empty boast that the Italian Army is one of the most democratic in the world.

To his Excellency the Prime Minister; to the Marquis di San Giuliano, Foreign Minister; to the Hon. Francesco Nitti, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce; to Commendatore Luigi Mercatelli, I express my thanks for information obtained from their various departments; and I must acknowledge services kindly rendered among others by Signor A. Albertini, editor *Corriere della Sera*; Dr. O. Malagodi, editor *La Tribuna*; Signor Michele Saman, of the Italian Administration in Tripoli; Signor Luigi Barzini, Signor Guelfo Civinini, Signor Marco Tavelli, and other Italian war-correspondents in Tripoli; Mr. Wood,

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American Consul-General at Tripoli; the Hon. Salvatore Barzilai, President of the Associazione della Stampa; Dr. O. Pedrazzi, Signor Ferdinando Paolieri, Signor Eugenio Coselschi, Professor Scipio Sighele, Comm. Guido Biagi, Professor Bonaventura, Dr. Roberto Assagioli, Signor Riccardo Nobili, Signor Carlo Vieusseux, Mr. Clarence Bateman, Professor Carlo Paladini, Signora Teresina Campani, Signorina Teresa Ubertis, Signora Sibilla Aleramo, Signora Ida Pazzini, Cav. Nunes Weiss, Avv. B. Rognetta, Signor Azzo Ronchey, Mrs. Rossetti Agresti, Signor Antonio Agresti, Mr. Richard Temple, Miss Howe, Miss Nella Luzzi, and my wife. I am indebted to Signor Danesi, of Rome, for the permission to use his portrait of the King, and to Cav. Luca Comerio for the permission to use some of his Tripoli photographs with which to supplement my own.

C. L.

FLORENCE,

*February 3, 1912.*

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# TRIPOLI AND YOUNG ITALY

## CHAPTER I

### DISCOVERY OF ITALY

THE world appears to have just discovered Italy. Or rather, judging from the tone of the foreign Press, the discovery of Tripoli and Italy have synchronised. The ignorance which has recently been uncovered concerning this "geographical expression" is truly colossal. With one or two creditable exceptions, the well-meaning but oft ill-informed purveyors of "intelligence" to the foreign newspapers have done very little to make known this new nation, its aspirations, and its troubles. For years they have gone along in the rut of routine, seemingly so soaked in old masters and archæology as to be impervious to impressions of the living Italy, palpitating and urgent around them. They have done little to acquaint their peoples with the fact that Italy is no longer merely a museum of past glories,



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but a factor of great potentiality in continental development—a Power indeed to be reckoned with. Editors of foreign newspapers have possibly more exciting material for their columns, and look upon things Italian as small fry indeed for the rapacious appetite of their reading public when there is a plethora of more highly seasoned fare. But, be that as it may, it is simply owing to its own ignorance that the world has been so rudely surprised by what it terms Italy's outburst. Possibly it is only because the nerves of the older Powers are getting very jumpy that they have turned "nasty" over the shock they received; but most disagreeable indeed have they been about it.

Italy makes no apology, however. And she has made it abundantly clear that she stands in no need of apologists. At one bound she has jumped into the midst of the European Bargain Sale, and, without so much as a "Scusi!" has snatched out of the hands of the elderly ladies struggling there a remnant of considerable value. Naturally, these outraged old ladies have turned upon her and called her "an impertinent young minx," have declared they "never did," and demand to know where she has learned her bad manners. But Italy stands

perfectly unabashed—a little flushed, perhaps, at her own temerity, but really amazed at the storm of international ethics she has evoked. She does not exactly put out her tongue, but as to the question where she learned her manners she coolly recalls to her elders the *Punch* story of the Puritan father, who, wishing to reprove his daughter for having been to the theatre, greets her freezingly with “Good morning, daughter of Satan!” “Good morning, father!” was the maiden’s sweet reply!

Most Pecksniffian has been the attitude of the “Friends of Italy.” Because, forsooth, fifty years ago, a few Britishers befriended and banqueted the Italian exiles, they have ever since been constantly reminding Italy of all she owes them. And with a meekness even beyond Tom Pinch she has submitted in silence to all the homilies addressed to her on the virtues of gratefulness. She has smiled a little wearily at these benevolent bores, and has accepted their gratuitous patronage with a shrug of her young shoulders. But now that some of the “Friends of Italy” have presumed to lecture her as if she were a naughty child, and had not been growing up all these years, she has become irritated and resentful, and declares that she will go in leading-strings no longer.

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This undertaking then is no apology for Italy. It is an attempt to present as comprehensively as possible the case for Italy. That there is need for such a presentment will be conceded by all fair-minded people who have hesitated to express an opinion based only on the information and misinformation in the public prints. For the sake of their own reputation for fair-play English-speaking people should insist upon an understanding of both sides of the question. It may be that the Italians are as ignorant of things British and American as these peoples are of things Italian ; yet this is scarcely conceivable. There would be some excuse for the Italians, for up to now they have made no claim to be world-leaders ; yet while it is a melancholy fact that deliberate misrepresentation is playing the biggest part in the present European unrest, this outbreak of hysteria and hypocrisy concerning Italy is surely unique in its exhibition of crass ignorance.

It is safe to say that until a few weeks ago very few of the people who are shouting the loudest knew where Tripoli was, and what it signified to Italy ; but nevertheless they proceeded with a sublime cocksureness to give Italy the benefit of their opinions. The following is a sample of

the ignorance of even so-called educated people concerning Italy ; a young man showed us a cablegram from his father recalling him home because he did not wish him to be in a country where war was going on ! And among even the travelling public, who none the less see very little but the insides of cosmopolitan hotels, and disdain to learn enough Italian even to say "Thank you !" there still prevails the insulting superstition that the Italians as a race are lazy, dirty, and dishonest. To such people it is no doubt awfully tiresome to have modern Italians about the place when they are desirous of ruminating among the Roman ruins or of clattering through cathedrals and cloisters. To them it is an outrage that these "common Italians" should claim to have any connection with the divine Dante, Michael Angelo, and Leonardo. Is it to be wondered at, then, that by her present display of vitality and efficiency Italy has rudely upset the complacency of a good many smug folk ?

Besides, nowadays, when a country wants a colony, it is not good form to go straight for the goal. It is considered etiquette first to put up some plea of a fervent desire to carry civilisation to the people of the benighted land it

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desires to colonise. There was no humbugging pretence of this kind about Italy's action, however. Her natives were being persecuted, imprisoned, and murdered in Tripoli, and her business men were being deliberately and scandalously hindered in their legitimate enterprises. When she had demanded redress, the Turks had practically laughed in her face, and they had taken every opportunity of exhibiting their contempt for her. The cup was running over. And still Italy, with a monumental patience, took no steps, beyond polite appeals to Turkish honour, to deal with a situation which cried aloud for drastic measures. She was confident in her rights in Tripoli. Had not France and England and other countries over and over again acknowledged her rights in Tripoli? But when she observed the rapidly growing influence of Germany at the Porte, when German interests were being encouraged in Cyrenaica, when a German line of steamers was making a bold bid for a monopoly of the carrying trade of that coast, and when German *Panthers* were on the prowl in the Mediterranean for ports and coaling-stations, Italy decided that not only could she tolerate no longer the persecution of her subjects and the studied boycott of her business interests, but that if the cheque she had upon

Tripoli was not to be rendered valueless in her hand she must cash it at once. Hence her ultimatum.

Naturally, this young upstart could not be forgiven for having shamelessly discarded the old rules of the game, and for not having first entered upon the prescribed polite "conversations." Some of that first feeling of irritation has passed away, and there are people of all countries ready to admit that Italy did wisely to strike first and "converse" afterwards. It was due in great part to the nerves of the Old World being in an attenuated condition that Italy's dramatic entrance on the international stage came as such a rude shock. But the bad temper displayed was because Tripoli was something more than a surprise: it was a revelation. So long had the "leading ladies" occupied the stage, that the world had forgotten there were other players who were not to be kept out of the piece. And when the newcomer revealed herself as a player of no mean parts, it was only natural that professional jealousy should be aroused.

The attitude of the German Press was perfectly understandable. Following upon her diplomatic humiliation by France and England, and the order to quit Agadir, Italy had, by making good



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her claim on Tripoli, rendered it impossible for the poor *Panther* to find refuge in any other port on the North African littoral, and had closed, possibly for ever, the door of North Africa to Germany. But how could the tirade of slander and abuse which appeared in a section of the British Press be explained? Even making allowance for the machinations of the financiers who were interested in Turkish Bonds, and the inspired despatches full of calumnies against the Italian Army coming from this source, the Italians were utterly at a loss to understand how the British people could be induced to believe these libels. They had heard something of the vagaries of a certain busybody who, ridden by his favourite fury "Julia," dashes wildly about the Continent pestering crowned heads with peace propositions, and they were undisturbed when this person melodramatically demanded sackcloth and ashes because nobody would take the Hague Tribunal seriously; but they were genuinely distressed by much of what appeared in leading newspapers which seemed to put Italy's action in a very bad light. Only those who were in Italy at the time can know how deeply she was hurt, and how really supersensitive to the good opinion of Britain the Italian people are.

To those who have not forgotten recent history, there never was a more colossal exhibition of cant. There was the ridiculous spectacle of pacifists, who for years have advocated the abolition of the British fleet, now demanding that that fleet should be sent out to deter Italy. The people who but a few years before were clamouring for the British Army to go and crush the "bloody Turk" for the atrocities he had committed on Christians, now discovered suddenly an overweening affection for the Turk, and lauded him to the sky for his virtues. Positively nauseating was the worked-up indignation of the "Friends of Italy," who, notwithstanding their professions of love for Italy, showed themselves the readiest to believe the libels on her fair name. Some of their protestations cut Italy to the heart, for how was she to appreciate at their true value the peculiar workings of the Nonconformist Conscience, or to know that the papers and the politics in Britain are now being run by the Chadbands and the Stigginses, who are liable to be thrown into hysterics and to suspend the Constitution over so innocuous an incident as a boxing match? However, the Latin sense of humour came a little to their rescue when they discovered that even the demure old *Thunderer* had allowed



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itself to publish a letter from an Italian lady of noble rank who dated her calumnies from a sanatorium! And when the Italian journalists had traced to its source the stream of lies coming from Tripoli, Italy recovered somewhat from her perturbation.

While in Tripoli, the writer made diligent inquiries as to the truth or otherwise of the statements alleging Italian "atrocities," of which a reputable Press agency had been the channel of dissemination. He met personally the resident of Tripoli, who acted as Reuter's correspondent, and whose despatches bore principally the libels complained of. About him he learned that prior to the war he had gone about wearing a badge signifying that he was a member of the Committee of Union and Progress, and had addressed street-corner meetings, urging the adoption by the Arabs of the compulsory military service ordered by the Turks. He had even been admitted into the synagogues to preach his gospel of conscription to the Israelites. The man speaks a little English, but is utterly unable to write the language, and the Italians think it is not much to the credit of the British Consulate that the despatches detailing the "atrocities" were made up there. The writer had the story





GENERAL CANEVA,  
Commander of the Italian Forces at Libya.

of the whole sordid business from the lips of Signor Luigi Barzini, the famous correspondent of the *Corriere della Sera*, who, with three other correspondents of high standing and repute, issued a statement to the Press, in which was set out the result of an interview with Senor Alvarez, the British Consul at Tripoli, whom they charged with complicity in supplying false news to Reuter's Agency respecting the conduct of the Italian troops. Faced by these indignant and insistent correspondents, the Consul could not deny that he had assisted Reuter's correspondent to compile his telegrams because he was ignorant of the English language, and admitted that the notorious affidavit of the three other correspondents, making accusations against the Italian soldiery, had also passed through the Consulate. Commenting upon this, the *Giornale d'Italia* thinks it necessary to point out that the British Consul at Tripoli is not an Englishman.

Certainly what followed the Arab treachery was an unpleasant piece of work, but, far from the Italian soldiery being the inhuman brutes pictured by certain disgruntled correspondents, the root of the mischief was in the very humaneness and kindness of the Italians. Had the invaders known and profited by the experience of British

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soldiers in dealing with the Arabs, they would never have allowed themselves to get into a position where they might be stabbed in the back ; they would have acted on the knowledge that an Arab engaged in what he has been deceived into considering a holy war cannot possibly understand anything of honour, and that to him all means are fair whereby he may kill a Christian and thus ensure for himself a happy hereafter. Italian trustfulness caused the trouble. When the troops were being transported to Tripoli they were lectured by their officers, who instilled into their minds a fraternal sentiment towards the Arabs, who, as they had ground for believing, would prefer Italian to Turkish rule. They read and explained to their men the contents of the pamphlet for the use of the officers in Tripoli, written by the Italian Staff. They called special attention to section 17, which speaks of the way to deal with the natives. It runs thus : " The natives are like children . . . they are to be treated with kindness, but corrected with firmness. It is advisable to be always calm with them. It is necessary to take into account their religion, and not to oppose their modes of worship. It is absolutely necessary to respect their women."

The Italian soldiery kept this in mind and tried hard at once to fraternise with the Arabs, to whom they behaved, as Mr. Richard Bagot remarks, "with almost unexampled generosity, kindness, and chivalry." The Arab response was treachery of the basest character. On asserting their friendliness the Arabs were allowed to continue in their houses and at work in their gardens. But when the Bersaglieri were hotly engaged with the Turks in front, and were secure, as they thought, in their trenches, these Arabs assailed them from behind and literally massacred them with weapons they had had buried in their gardens. Six hundred killed was the price the Italians paid that day for their misplaced trust in the Arabs. And the wounded were mutilated and prisoners were tortured in the most fiendish manner. Some Italian soldiers were crucified, others were disembowelled, others while alive had their eyelids sewn together, yet others were buried alive with their heads above ground to die a most agonising death. The mutilations of the dead bodies are indescribable. The writer saw photographs and took some himself which it is impossible to publish, but which tell a sickening tale of unspeakable outrage. Dum-dum bullets, flat-nosed and "criss-crossed," were and are

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being used, and when it is realised that while the ordinary average of war is one killed to five wounded, the Italian losses averaged three killed to two wounded, one begins to understand upon what side the "atrocities" were. And the most horrible things are not attributed to the Arabs, but to the Turks, those half-savage Asiatic Turks whose handiwork in torture betrays an incriminating similarity to atrocities committed on Christians elsewhere. The Italians declare that the Arabs, fanatical as they are, are incapable of the finesse of torture and mutilation that was carried out upon the prisoners and wounded falling into the hands of the enemy.<sup>1</sup> But while a certain class of Austrian, German, American,

<sup>1</sup> The *Times* correspondent wrote: "I saw in an Arab house, which had been used by the Red Cross as a field hospital, five mutilated Bersaglieri. One of them had been crucified, with the eyeballs threaded with coarse palm fibre through the temples and nose. The eyelids had been stitched crosswise to keep them open. In a sunken garden I counted eleven corpses piled up, horribly mutilated and dismembered. One of them still had the Red Cross badge on his arm. In the corner of the garden there were nine nude mutilated bodies. One had been impaled, another had been crucified with the crosspiece thrust through the muscles of the back, the neck, and the left hand. The right hand had been cut off, and the abdomen had been slashed open. In the Arab cemetery four soldiers had been buried up to the chest, and the hands had been cut off. Their agonised expressions justify the presumption that they had been buried alive. Many others had been similarly treated, all of whom had been missing since October 23."





GENERAL CANEVA AND HIS STAFF AT THE CASTLE.  
The guns were captured from the Turks.



and English papers accused the Italian soldiers of indiscriminate massacre of women and children, not a word was said about the other side of the picture. It is to the everlasting credit of the *Times* correspondent that, in the face of the maudlin meetings of protest in London, he wrote that "there can hardly be one reasonable man anywhere, certainly no reasonable soldier, who will not acquit the Italian army of the charge of inhumanity." Least of all could Britain, with her own record of the Indian Mutiny and of the Soudan, set up as a Puritanical critic. In India the British had short shrift for the rebels, who certainly had a *patrie* to fight for. Here in Tripoli the Arabs never have had a *patrie* and never could understand what fighting for a Fatherland means. Thus the Italians assert that by all the canons of what is termed civilised warfare, they did the only wise and just thing in summarily executing all who, after warning had been so carefully given, were found in possession of arms.

What Lord Roberts wrote about it is worthy of reproduction ; he said that "such a desperate state of affairs would, in any case, warrant desperate measures to re-establish the equilibrium of battle. Time also was pressing, as the main

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attack by the Turks and Arabs was imminent. That the means employed to establish what I have called the equilibrium of battle was severe is doubtless true, but in war it is usually the severest measures that are, in the long run, the most humane. No soldier will put any credence in the reports that women and children were deliberately killed by the Italians, but doubtless in the act of clearing the hostile villages behind the Italian lines many innocent people suffered with the guilty. Such things are unfortunately inevitable in war. In no army in the world could the orders which General Caneva found it imperative to issue for the clearance of the Tripoli oasis have been carried out without instances of regrettable severity. The very urgency of the operation alone would necessitate this severity."

The Italians were actually charged with killing children, but they are passionately fond of babies, and their soldiers were naturally very indignant over such charges. Among officers and men the writer was often called upon for an explanation of these outrageous charges, but he could only beg that the malevolence of a few journals, and blundering indiscretions of others, should not be accounted unto the whole British nation. One army surgeon demanded to know if the writer

could guess why the medical corps were not wearing their Red Cross badges. It was because the Red Cross was nothing less than a *tireballe*. After exhibiting as a triumph of Italian surgical skill the radiograph of a badly smashed forearm of a Turk, which they had set right again, these same surgeons also produced the ugly flattened-out jagged bullets which had given them no chance of saving their own wounded, and fiercely demanded who had a right to talk about "the rules of war." The writer had a very uncomfortable quarter of an hour with those army surgeons.

Surely the common sense of the British people in particular should have put them on their guard immediately they knew that the General Caneva had instituted a strict censorship. They could easily have imagined the feelings of the crowd of war-correspondents who were obliged to kick their heels, and keep out of the way of the soldiers. Gone were all the chances of brilliant blood-stirring "scoops," and it was naturally to be expected that when they had to rely solely upon their imaginations, pique and temper against General Caneva would colour the stories of some of the correspondents. The "despatch-bakery" at Constantinople accomplished

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wonders in the way of Turkish victories and Italian "atrocities," but it was hard pressed in competition by the "bakeries" of British and German correspondents at Malta and Chiasso. The most scandalous "stories" were suspected of coming from a Press agency in Milan—a strong Clerical combination, because from this office came the lies about the cholera. This agency was responsible for the "10,000 cases a day at Palermo" report, and "eighty-four cholera cases in Via Dante, Milan," and so on. The anti-Italian "war-despatches" followed, and eventually the authorities were obliged to order the director of the agency, a German, to get out of the country. The Vatican denies having anything to do with the agency, but its exposure created a good deal of consternation throughout Italy.

There have been published piles of books in English, French, and German, purporting to be studies of Italy and the Italians, but for the most part they deal with Italy of yesterday, with its ancient glories, its art treasures, and its landscape. And the few books and review articles which affect to treat Italy of to-day have too often adopted the attitude of the Superior Person and a tone of patronage which has been bitterly



resented by self-respecting Italians, who are well aware that most of the travellers in Italy come into contact only with that special class which exists to administer to the bodily comfort and convenience of tourists, a class which cannot by any means be taken as representative of Italy. It is quite understandable that foreigners should display a keener interest in the works of dead and gone Italians than in the works of living Italians ; but then that does not fit them to pass judgment upon Italy of to-day. Many Americans, for instance, only know the Italians by the cheap labourers from Southern Italy who pour into New York by the hundreds of thousands, and they affect a lofty disdain for the " dago " ; but, inquisitive globe-trotters as they are, most travellers from the United States appear to fail altogether in getting into close touch with the real Italy. There are a fortunate few from each country who have penetrated the outer works of Roman ruins and have got beyond the museums of art, and have discovered the living Italy ; and they have grown passionately to love this country and its people. If during the period of newspaper calumny the British newspaper reader could have come among the British colonies in Florence, Milan, Rome, or Naples, his ears would have



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burned to listen to the comments of these genuine friends of Italy.

The great British public, just because their only educator has been the newspaper, and because they have not otherwise taken the trouble to learn about other countries, especially could not possibly know of the Young Italy that has arisen during the past generation. They are still accustomed to think of Italy in terms of Garibaldi, red shirts, macaroni, and oranges. There is a little excuse, perhaps, for this, because the Italians themselves had, up to only a few months ago, but a vague realisation of what was happening to themselves. Tripoli not only opened the eyes of foreigners, but caused the scales to fall from the eyes of the Italians. Just exactly what has taken place in their national life it is too early, perhaps, to estimate, but it is something big with potentialities. At present Italy glories in a new-found strength, a natural vigour of which only a few prophets had dreamed, and which the bulk of the Italian nation had not believed to be possible. In this respect they are themselves somewhat to blame for the poor esteem in which they have been held by other countries. For years it has been the dominant note in public speech and print almost to apologise for the existence on

earth of the Italian people. They were always emphasising their poverty of goods and of ideals and lamenting their past glories. When corruption was discovered in their public services, they set up such a howl that all the world could hear, and thus other people got an exaggerated idea of the extent of the corruption, when, as a matter of fact, it was but as the peccadilloes of schoolboys compared to the colossal financial corruptions in some other countries. Of course, newspapers thrive more upon the reporting of scandal than they do upon the reporting of good deeds. They cannot catch pennies with the portrayals of virtue. Hence many correspondents, having to earn their bread and butter, were obliged to fasten upon everything "corrupt" in Italian public life, to the disregard of everything that counted unto virtue; and thus the outsider got a cinematographic picture of Italy of a particularly doleful character. "Muck-raking" certainly has a positive value when it is done in your own house, but when you attempt to do it in your neighbour's, you stultify your own efforts if at the same time you close your eyes to all the good that there is in your neighbour and his house.

It is perhaps not too much to say that the result of all this one-sided portraiture, and of

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Italy's own self-depreciation, has been that something approaching to contempt has been felt by other countries concerning Italy. This feeling was encouraged by the news of the great disaster which befell her Abyssinian campaign. Not only was it a military *débâcle*, but its moral effect was that Italy almost lost all faith in herself. In the dark years that followed, Italians went about with bowed heads, and any man who dared to talk of a bright future for the country was sneered at and treated as harebrained. There was a decided slump in optimism, and so far as any foreign or colonial policy was concerned, why! the Italians refused to listen. This feeling, of course, was communicated abroad, until even Turkey assumed an attitude of most exasperating contempt. Then came Messina, and the foreign countries, while despising Italy's seeming weakness as a nation, poured out their pity upon her, and Italy was exceedingly grateful; but, of course, pity is not respect, and so the plight of Italian prestige was worse than ever.

But believing that her hopes of colonisation were blasted, and that she was a negligible quantity in the councils of the nations, Italy turned her attentions inward and began a really effective house-cleaning. So that although she

has undoubtedly suffered for her procrastination in her foreign policy, it is really due directly to the vigour and purpose to which she devoted herself to home affairs that she has now been able to "make good" in international affairs. The social reforms which have been effected, and the recovery made in her financial position, are very remarkable.

"No one expected the prompt and energetic beginning of military action," writes Cav. Palliccia; "no one would have imagined that Italy could prepare and land unexpectedly in one week an expeditionary force in Marsa Tobruk. No one, perhaps, knew that Italy was no longer obliged to let her financial and economic needs rule her foreign policy. No one, perhaps, knew that Italy had 824,000,000 francs ready, sufficient to finance the war for over a year; that the Italian budget, which in 1896 had a deficit of 413,000,000 francs, shows this year a surplus of more than 40,000,000 francs, in spite of the heavy extraordinary expenses caused by the Sicilian earthquake and the Vesuvian eruption; that the deposits in the Postal Savings Bank, which amounted in 1894 to nearly 425,000,000 francs, have now risen to 2,000,000,000 francs; that the economic life of the nation is no more at the mercy of foreign capitalists."

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And foreigners were just as ignorant concerning the great improvement that has been effected in the standard of life, naturally coincident with Italy's financial prosperity. The Exhibition at Turin taught those who were fortunate enough to visit it a great deal as to the gigantic strides being made by Italian industry, despite the unfavourable nature of her country and the absolute lack of minerals. And, discouraging as the country is in a large part even to agriculture, the wonderful advance which has been made in that respect, chiefly through co-operative methods, is also an unknown quantity to the foreign newspaper reader, whose attention is chiefly occupied by the diplomatic duels of the bigger countries and by the internal troubles of his own country. What does he know of the splendid fight waged by Italy against poverty and disease? And also what does he know about the continual bleeding of Italy by emigration? And in spite of this bleeding, she was being well-nigh suffocated. Any claims which Italy might be supposed to have when the dividing up of the earth was being done were altogether forgotten; the foreigner's whole attention was engrossed by what the big Powers were doing. He did not see that Italy was

being rapidly hemmed in in the Mediterranean, where alone lay any hopes for her expansion, and that as expansion was more vital to her than to anybody else, she was in danger of asphyxiation. Italy had the first claim upon Tunis, and although she was elbowed out by a more powerful competitor, yet the sons of Italy form the population and do the work of that colony. Italy stood aside during the gobbling up of Morocco, although, but for past blunders of her Ministers and the treachery of her "friends," she would have been first there to-day. And now, when the only remnant left, which is close to her own door, comes into the market, so to speak, why is it surprising that Italy should make a bid for it? Italy is not to blame for the policy of the "mailed fist" and of the "big stick," which is the universal policy to-day—the smaller nations always stand to lose in such a game; but Italy certainly cannot be blamed for making an effort to save herself from being crushed under the heel of one of the contending leviathans.

If the foreigner did not know that for years Tripoli has been a festering sore in the side of Italy, he must blame the foreign affairs editor of his newspaper. Certainly, the feeling among



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the Italians themselves was unmistakable, and from the highest to the lowest they expressed their approval in a decided manner when the ultimatum went forth. Of course, when the possibility of bloodshed became apparent, there was a section of the Socialists and Pacifists which sought to stop the war. That was to be expected, because the Socialists of all countries are supposed to be "agin" war of any kind; but their opposition was of a very half-hearted character. There are politicians even among the Socialists, and to many of them it did not seem very wise "politics" to run counter to such an overwhelming majority. The fact that the twenty-four hours' general strike called for by some of the working-class leaders proved a miserable fiasco is eloquent of the people's support of the Government policy; indeed, it was openly endorsed by a large number of the Socialists themselves, who looked upon the present conflict as inevitable. "There has never been in the history of the country," writes Signor Luigi Villari, "a cause on which the whole nation was so absolutely unanimous. Even in the wars of the Risorgimento the real enthusiasts were the middle classes and the aristocracy, and they were divided into parties



often bitterly hostile to each other—Monarchists, Republicans, Garibaldians. But the Tripoli campaign is the war of the Italian people, for the people feel that at last their country will take its rightful place as a Great Power, and that there will now be room for the population to expand under the Italian flag without having to emigrate and serve under foreign taskmasters. Every one feels this, from the landlord and mill-owner to the humblest *contadino*. That is why so many thousands of emigrants have left well-paid jobs in America to come and serve under the colours."

The revolutionary Socialist, Labriola, in an article in the *Scintilla*, after noting the reaction which had occurred in the public opinion against Italy, asserted that "the importance of the Tripoli expedition is, above all, that Italy has entered upon the scenes, and that international situations will no longer be changed only by the will of Germany and England, whose rivalry has been until lately the pivot around which all international competitions have turned." After accusing other Socialists of ineptitude in not understanding the revolutionary value of the Italian initiative, Labriola went on to take up the cudgels against Karl Kautsky, the German Socialist, who had spoken of the Italians as

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“bandits.” He reproached him with having associated himself with “the imprecations of the plutocratic and Imperialistic Press” of his country, which had risen against Italy because she had crossed the plans of the Imperial Government “to obtain from Turkey at Tobruk a coaling-station destined to transform Germany into a Mediterranean Power.” In answer to Kautsky’s charge that Italy had disregarded the “rights of others,” Labriola pointed out the fact that Tripoli was not Turkish ground, and described his arguments as absurdities. To this famous exponent of Karl Marx, Labriola actually quoted Marx himself on the “rights of civilisation against barbarism, of historical development against quietness and stagnation,” and asserted that “behind Turkey stands the Europe of money, which desires its prey, and is angry against those who wish to deprive it of this prey; a Europe that lends to Turkey at cent. per cent. and trembles for its guarantees.”

The Italian Pacifists were also a divided house over the war, but the fact that some of them took a decided view in favour of the expedition should impress the outsiders who, without information, were in a hurry to pass judgment. The veteran peace advocate, Moneta, who was formerly President of

the International Peace and Arbitration Society, roundly denounced the action of some of his colleagues, who, he thought, had been unwarrantably severe in their judgment and unfair in their condemnation of the Italian Government. The nation had to make its choice, he said, between expansion and collapse. It had to show its mettle if it was not to be treated as a *quantité négligeable*. It had to obey an "inflexible law of history, a decree of evolution."

Briefly, the Italian case is this :

That Italy could no longer tolerate the persecution of her countrymen in Tripoli ;

That Turkey was no longer fit to hold Tripoli ;

That the taking of Tripoli was a vital, political necessity to Italy ;

That her right to Tripoli had been acknowledged for many years by England and France ;

That there were good reasons to believe that she would be forestalled by another Power if she hesitated a moment longer ;

That, indeed, Italy's very existence as a nation was being threatened, and to allow the "iron ring" around her to be completed, would have been to sign her own death-warrant.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CASE AGAINST TURKEY

TURKEY had stolen Libya, and, although possession is nine points of the law, Turkey had no more moral right to that country than the thief will have to the "Mona Lisa," even after possessing it for thirty or forty years. It was by a particularly dastardly trick that she robbed the Karamanli family of its territory, and the members of that family have to this day neither forgiven nor forgotten. Of course, just because this territory was "stolen goods," the Italians were not therefore justified in taking it away from the thief; but the fact that Turkey was a thief, and took the country by kidnapping its owners, should be sufficient answer to those good people who are talking so much about Italy's violation of the "rights of others."

Then, the Turks were absolutely unfitted to hold and govern Libya, just as they are unfitted for government in other countries. Their pre-

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sence has been a positive blight on the place. Having stolen it, their only method of governing it was to plunder it ; and it is not too strong to say, even having regard to the grave faults of other colonising Powers, that the continuance of Turkish control in Tripoli and Cyrenaica was a crime against civilisation. The famous German explorer, Rohlfs, who knew the country better than any other man, remarked that " in Tripolitania more than anywhere else the work of Turkey is really the negation of any civil government " ; and that is what Europe ought to remember now that Italy has intervened to heal a situation both shameful and degrading. It is fatuous to attempt to minimise the fact that Tripoli, under Turkish misrule, had become an Augean stable, and the sooner it was cleaned out the better. Burke once referred to " the barbarous anarchic despotism of Turkey, where the finest countries, in the most genial climates in the world, are wasted by peace more than any countries have been worried by war ; where arts are unknown, where manufactures languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where the human race itself melts away, and perishes under the eye of the observer."

And that fits exactly Tripoli under the Turks,

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with the addition that the Turks have studiously and deliberately hindered and obstructed progress. Possibly they were aware that sooner or later they would be driven out of Tripoli, if not by Italy, by some other colonising Power, and they restricted their administrative energy merely to extorting as much as they could from the country while they had a chance. And they spent nothing in return upon public services or institutions necessary to civilised communities. Over a thousand kilometres of notoriously inaccessible coast were left absolutely devoid of ports, and those that go down to the sea in ships must be thankful that the French put up a few lighthouses, making navigation possible. Of course, this did not worry the Turks ; it suited their game to keep not only the coast but the hinterland inaccessible to strangers. Thus, with no attempt being made on the part of the Government to encourage the raising of necessary capital and the introduction of the methods of civilisation, the whole history of the Turkish occupation is one long story of exploitation, of the imposition of taxes beyond the limits of the possible, and of the ruthless destruction by fire and sword of the indigenous people who could not, or would not, pay the price demanded.

Both Englishmen and Frenchmen, and travellers



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of other nationalities as well, can and do testify to the massacre of innocent men, women, and children by the unspeakable Asiatic Turks, let loose as gendarmerie in the interior of Libya to enforce the plundering decrees of this despotism. In the castles and barracks of Bengasi and Tripoli, which the Italians bombarded and now occupy, it was a regular custom at five o'clock in the afternoon for the Turks to bring out their prisoners into the courtyards, and to the sound of military music, which drowned their groans and shrieks, to have these poor unfortunates beaten and tortured. And it was the political prisoners, often men of refinement and standing, not common criminals, who were subjected to the worst of these tortures. To the truth of this statement many travellers can testify, who, on passing the barracks at this particular hour, have heard continued shrieks of pain, which not even the strident Turkish music could wholly smother. Having regard to these barbarous methods of government, it is not surprising that, while the neighbouring countries of Egypt and Tunis were rapidly reverting to something of their ancient prosperity and well-being, Libya remained arid, uncultivated, and hermetically closed to all progress and civilisation. An Eastern proverb



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says that " Grass never grows where the Turkish hoof has trod " !

Nothing flourished save the slave trade, brought from the centre of Africa to the Mediterranean coast by the caravan routes of the Fezzan and the Wadai, the caravans returning laden with arms, contraband goods which have played no small part in the perpetual warfare being waged by Islam against the pioneers from European countries. The Turk always pretended not to see or hear what was going on, and it is well known that no small portion of the dishonest gains of these contraband merchants went into his pocket. The Tripoli Turks sent as presents to their relatives and friends in other parts of the Empire slaves illicitly brought into their own provinces. Not only did the Turks fail to guarantee the safety of the ordinary caravan routes as they were bound down to do, thus allowing the erstwhile rich commerce, which came to Tripoli and other coast towns of Libya, to be diverted into Egypt and Tunis, where safety was guaranteed and the commerce subjected to only comparatively light imposts ; but, if the charges are true that are made against them, the lawless soldiery were themselves guilty of looting the caravans.

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In addition to the shameful trade in human flesh, the Turks were responsible for the continuance of another cruel commerce against which the civilised world long ago protested. While on all the other coasts washed by the Mediterranean, sponge-fishing by means of divers going to great depths has been rigorously prohibited, the Turkish Government allowed it to flourish on the Libyan coast, the divers frequently being sent to depths of eighty metres, when a depth of thirty metres is dangerous to life. Statistics of this trade show that on account of the intoxication produced by the oxygen, and on account of the great and alternating pressure of the air-column, about a hundred and thirty fishermen die annually in these seas ; and some fifty others become stone deaf, or are subject to vertigo, convulsions, and partial or complete paralysis. The Turkish officials, forgotten or unpaid by the Government at Constantinople, permitted anything whereby they were able to pocket a little commission for themselves. These nefarious practices were well known, and were attested to by the Consuls of Britain, Russia, France, and Italy, who on various occasions made strong representations regarding them ; but although the usual obsequious promise was readily

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forthcoming from the Turks, not the slightest effort was made to rectify matters.

It is the fashion of those peculiar people who have suddenly discovered a passionate love for Turkey to assume that Turkish dominion was perfectly acceptable to the Arabs and the other indigenous peoples of Libya; when the truth is exactly the contrary. Not only had the country been allowed to become the refuge of pirates and one of the last strongholds of the slave-traders, but it had been rendered sterile and uncultivated because of the plundering of the natives, who were quite content to cultivate the soil in their own primitive ways if not robbed of their produce. Naturally, with the caravan trade being diverted into other countries, and agricultural and local industry declining, the revenue of the Turkish exploiters diminished rapidly, and the only remedy they could propose was the levying of fresh imposts. They taxed the people, the cattle, the trees, the plants, the huts, the wells, the food. The first impositions in the way of direct taxation were made about 1901, and met with a threatening resistance from the Arabs. There were enormous demonstrations outside the walls of Tripoli, and threats of reprisals were made. For a time the imposts

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were successfully evaded, but the wily Turk soon discovered a means of ensuring his revenue. He farmed out the collection of the taxes. The duty was delegated to the Arab chiefs, who paid lump sums to the Turks for the privilege. It meant practically giving them power of life and death over the poorer Arabs, and gendarmes were lent to them to carry out their work. For one or two thousand francs cash down, a chief was allowed to do practically what he liked ; and he did not fail to skin his victims down to the ground. Inevitably, this gave rise to much discontent and frequent resistance of a disorganised character, which, however, was ruthlessly crushed. A large amount of property was confiscated and stolen in this manner, and so oppressive were the imposts, that thousands of trees were deliberately cut down in order to avoid paying the tax upon them. In one district alone in Cyrenaica over 16,000 palm, olive, and orange trees were cut down because it paid the owners better to do this than to pay the tax upon them. The cultivation of the soil became wellnigh impossible under such circumstances ; there was no replanting of trees and the oases dwindled, the work of searching for new water sources became paralysed, and with irrigation wofully insufficient

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something like famine came upon the people. The Bedouins in particular found life unbearable, and migrated principally into Egypt, where labour was given a better chance. France also profited greatly by this emigration. The Arabs are none too prone to manual labour, and they certainly found no encouragement to cultivate the land under such outrageous conditions.

The best wealth of a country is the population itself, and not only has the soil been rendered sterile and the oases denuded, but the oppression of the Turks has robbed the country of its people. Ever since the Revolution in Turkey, the Arabs and the Jews of Libya have jealously guarded their exemption from serving in the Turkish Army, but this privilege was annulled on March 17, 1911. When the conscripts were called up, there were many outbreaks of rebellion. The Arab will fight as no other fighter will, when duly worked up by religious fanaticism, but he strongly disapproved the attempt to drill him into a regular war machine; and the Fezzans also proved very obstreperous. Rather than serve, many fled the country, and the writer was assured by Signor Saman, of the Italian Consulate, that not less than ten thousand of the sturdiest young Arabs had left the country around Tripoli and gone over

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into French territory. It is only necessary to attend in Tripoli the distribution of the mail from the French colony, and watch the seething multitude of Arabs scrambling for their letters, to realise something of the magnitude of the "trek" into Tunis and what a loss it has meant to Libya.

There was not the slightest love lost, then, between the Arabs and the Turks, and it was but a natural result that, plundered and persecuted as they were, the Arabs avowed they would welcome any European Power that would intervene and remove their oppressors. With the growing influence of the Italians, who were reviving for them a little of their lost trade, it followed that appeals were made to the Italian Government to take their part, and a petition, signed by a large number of the influential Arabs in Cyrenaica, was actually sent to Rome. So sanguine were the Arabs in Bengasi that very soon the Italian fleet would appear in answer to their cry, that they laid in large stocks of red, white, and green flags and bunting in preparation. But the Italian fleet never came, the Arabs had to use up the red, white, and green material for *baraccani* for their women and children, and, realising that the Italians seemed unable to obtain redress for the persecution and even murder of



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their nationals, and how other nations were ostentatiously favoured to the exclusion of Italians, they gradually lost faith in the Italian Government. The Arabs are like all Orientals in their esteem for force and strength and authority, and the apparent weakness of the Italians disappointed them. Naturally, the subsequent hostility of the Arabs and their armed opposition to the Italians requires some explanation in view of this, but it is a fact that in the opening days of the hostilities not a single Arab took up arms against the invaders. The Turks immediately set to work, however, to preach the Holy War, with embellishments, alleging that the Italians would ravage the women and children of the Arabs. A few were won over, and, taking part in the fighting, were killed. The rest was easy for the preachers of the Holy War. They had only to point to the slain Arabs to show the Italian intention to wipe out Islam.

Bearing in mind the original theft, the subsequent Turkish plundering and laying waste of the country, the iniquities encouraged, the oppression of the people, all fair-minded persons, perhaps even those who hold "Ottomans," must admit that the measure was full to overflowing, and that some European Power was bound to intervene



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before long. But over and above all this, Italy had her own case against the Turks. It did not take the Turk very long to reason out that Morocco, Algiers, and Tunis were irrevocably lost to the Ottoman Empire, even if he had ever dreamt of attaining temporal as well as spiritual control there; and so it was vital to his headship of Islam that he should cling tenaciously to what was left. If England and France had been strong enough to push Mohammedanism back into the desert, Turkey was certainly not going to allow Italy, for whose military strength she had but ill-concealed contempt, to hustle her out of Tripolitania. It might be asked why then was it assumed that Turkey would open the door to her friend Germany? But while it would have served Germany's present purpose to have port privileges or a coaling-station, it was obvious that, from their rapidly-growing interests and pushfulness, the Italians meant real business. Hence the violently anti-Italian attitude, the premeditated policy of pin-pricks, the exasperating evasion of all honest treaties and undertakings. The "slimness" of the Turks was never better illustrated than in Tripoli. While the Sublime Porte invited the world to look on and admire the genuineness of her affection for Italy, and her sincere desire to

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meet her wishes, definite orders were given to the Tripoli officials to pursue a policy of provocation and obstruction of all Italians and every thing Italian. Indeed, one Vali, who was recalled from Tripoli over some particularly outrageous piece of work, complained bitterly that he should be punished for carrying out the instructions of his own Foreign Office.

On the outbreak of hostilities the Italian Foreign Office sent out an official *communiqué* to its Ambassadors and Consuls outlining some of Italy's grievances against Turkey, and explaining that Italy's drastic action was but the epilogue to a long series of insults and "obstructive antagonisms" on the part of the Turks against Italy and the Italians. From every part of the kingdom had come innumerable complaints demanding that the Government should put an end once for all to the high-handed actions, oppressions, and injustices they had had to endure at the hands of the Turks. And with a patience almost unbelievable the Italian Government had gone on making request after request for redress. The Sublime Porte answered in almost every case that the matter should have immediate attention : but, as a matter of fact, nothing was ever done.

" All the wrongs to which Italian subjects were

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subjected in the various portions of the Ottoman Empire remain unrectified," San Giuliano's *communiqué* declares, "as well as those which originated during the massacre of Adana in 1909, and during the spoliation of the Agency of the Società della Navigazione Generale Italiana at Santiquaranta. And an infinite number of other complaints and controversies exist of a more or less grave character, as, for instance, the lack of respect shown to the employees of Italian Consulates, even going to the extent of assaults on their persons, which all prove the inimical atmosphere that surrounds our subjects, and which do not correspond to the renewed official relations existing between the two States."

With the new régime, which awakened so much hope in Italy, these regrettable occurrences increased in number and importance. "Quite recently a very serious case occurred, namely, the rape of the sixteen-year old minor, Giulia Franzoni, who was fraudulently kidnapped from her family, workers on the Ottoman railway in Adana, imprisoned, and forcibly converted to Islamism, and married to a Mussulman, despite the protests of her parents and foreigners of other nationalities, and despite the intervention of the Italian Consulate and the Embassy. This occurrence,

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which would be of grave importance to any nation, is still graver for Italy, who has to protect a large number of Italian emigrants occupied in the work of building railroads in Asia Minor. The very fact that this barbaric system of conversion by force, and this abduction of an innocent girl, remain unpunished, may lead to other similar actions against the whole working-class population, who are chiefly Italians, and who are obliged, owing to their work, to live in these regions."

About the murders of Padre Giustino and Gastone Terreni, to which the *communiqué* also makes reference, the writer was able to glean from Italian officials in Tripoli, charged with the investigation, evidence which looks very ugly indeed for Turkey. The doing to death of the kindly Father Giustino was a dastardly deed, committed with an almost incredible ferocity, and justifies the Italians in Tripoli in saying that the Turks would stop at nothing to prevent the growth of Italian influence. The reverend Father had won the affection of a large number of the Arabs and other indigenous peoples in the district of Derna, and his work had been so successful that he had bought land on which to build a church. He was intimidated and threatened by the Turkish officials, but he persistently refused to give up the

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land again. So one day he was found done to death. There were five different wounds in his body, and it was easily discernible that each wound had been inflicted by a different weapon, proving that at least five persons were directly concerned in the murder. The Italian Government demanded that the assassins should be punished, but they could not be found, although resident Italians openly charged certain Turkish officials with direct complicity. All that followed was a shuffling of officials, and the one who was suspected of playing a prominent part in the crime was promoted !

The clearing up of the murder of Gastone Terreni, an Italian resident of Tripoli, was no more satisfactory. Gastone Terreni was something of a journalist, and, because of his exceptional knowledge of Oriental languages, was frequently employed as a guide into the interior. He was the author of several articles which told the truth unpleasantly for Turkish administration, especially concerning their ill-treatment of the Arabs. Naturally, he was a marked man. He was engaged in some investigation at Sidi Ben-Hur, where he was met by Turkish soldiers, who offered no objection to his exploration, although in all other cases the most decided objection had been taken to Italian travel-

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lers and exploration. He was even the guest of the Turks one evening ; but next morning his body was found lying stretched halfway on to the narrow balcony across the threshold of his room, with a bullet wound right through his head. Noise of the death reached Tripoli, and immediately Signor Saman set about making inquiries. The authorities professed ignorance, and said they knew of no Italian being at Sidi ; but when twenty-four hours had elapsed, giving time to clear things up a little, they admitted, first that there was a dead man, secondly that he was an Italian, and thirdly that he had committed suicide. Signor Saman made an investigation, and the Italian authorities did not let the matter rest. The bullet had entered Terreni's head from behind and had come out at the forehead, which clearly refuted the idea of suicide. Besides, the pistol carried by Terreni, of Montenegro manufacture, was of such a large and awkward pattern that it was clearly impossible for him to have inflicted the wound with it himself. The chief assassin was made sergeant of gendarmerie, and up to the Italian occupation was walking about Tripoli very pleased with himself.

“ For these barbarous crimes,” the *communiqué* remarks, “ it proved impossible to obtain any



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satisfaction or to get a serious criminal or civil investigation, though this was demanded by the families of the dead, and insisted upon by the diplomatic and consular authorities. Declarations such as 'There is no cause for interference,' or 'An amnesty has wiped out this special offence,' was all that the local authorities condescended to give in reply. Such deplorable actions, notoriously caused by the hatred of Turks for the Italian, filled the Italian colony with consternation and discouragement, and every useful initiative was discouraged. Every intervention on the part of the Royal Consular authorities in the Vilayet was openly or secretly undermined by the Turkish authorities." When the subject of any other country had a grievance, there was a different story to tell. For instance, recently an American painter, Johnson, was arrested because he was painting a mosque. In less than twenty-four hours the Vali, with public ceremony in the market-place, dismissed the two policemen who had arrested the painter.

Quite recently, Gustave Arbib, the member of a family long resident in Tripoli, journalist, and proprietor of the newspaper *L'Eco di Tripoli*, brought upon his head also the persecution of the Turks for telling something of the truth. He was set upon by gendarmes and beaten. He



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naturally defended himself, and was arrested for assault. Signor Saman took up the matter, and sought to see Arbib in prison, but objection was made. However, he went there, and, on being refused, brushed aside a gendarme and forced his way into the room where Arbib was. For this he was cited and ordered to appear before the Court for assault. This, of course, was contrary to all international procedure, that the Dragoman of a foreign Consulate should be cited for having concerned himself with a subject of his own country, and strong representations were made at Constantinople on the matter. Arbib was condemned, but did not serve any imprisonment, and the matter rested *sans fini*.

This uninterrupted series of violations, intimidations, and mishandlings was quite openly favoured and approved by a local paper, the official organ of the Vali of the Vilayet, printed in his own printing-office, and inspired by him. It had a large circulation among the Arabs, and never omitted an opportunity to offend and insult Italy, and published vehement tirades on the industrial and commercial expansion of the Italians in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. "Take care," it said, "because if this spot of oil expands much more, we shall one day find ourselves

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turned out of our own house." That Turkish editor possibly never thought his prophecy would come true, and went on to bait the Italians in every issue of his sheet. Alternating with articles on the advantages which would come to Turkey if she would make concessions to some European Powers, preferably to Germany, which might put a stop to Italy's encroachment, appeared articles gloating over Italy's defeat in Abyssinia, and pouring ridicule upon Italy's pretensions as a military nation. The paper even went so far as to incite its readers to show by physical force their disapproval of the Italians, and, especially during the few months previous to the bombardment, Italians and other Europeans in general went about in fear for their bodily safety.

The Turkish Government was very much opposed to all attempts on the part of the people of any nation to explore the hinterland of Tripolitania. But it was particularly opposed to the Italians in this respect. Request after request for permission was refused, while any attempts to go "accidentally" off the beaten track were met by rough handling at the hands of a particularly low breed of gendarmes. Eventually San Filippo and Sforza, two Italian engineers, were accorded permission for a miner-

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alogical expedition ; but although, after a great deal of pressure had been brought to bear on it, the Turkish Government had finally granted this permission, Ibrahim Pasha at Tripoli, obviously with the encouragement of Constantinople, began to put all kinds of obstacles in their way. At first he said he was sorry, but it was impossible to find enough camels—and it did seem as if there was nobody who wanted even a good price for his camels. But the engineers set to work and got camels for themselves. Then other obstacles were put in their way ; but the explorers kept their tempers and overcame the obstacles ; and when at last they could not be kept from starting, a Turkish officer was sent with them as escort, but with instructions to make things as uncomfortable as he possibly could. He followed out his instructions so well that before long the explorers insisted upon the man's withdrawal and the substitution of another officer. Constantinople made objections, but at last recalled the officer, Zonara, and substituted another, Orphella. Where the expedition is now, nobody knows. At first it was thought that they had been quietly got rid of, but happily there is now some reason to believe that they are still alive, although in the hands of the Turks.

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Last year an Italian archæological mission sought permission to excavate in Cyrenaica, and waited long and patiently for the reply from Constantinople. After a considerable time had elapsed, and the Italians had about given up hope, there suddenly came the bald intimation to the head of the Italian party of archaeologists, who had taken up his abode in Bengasi, that the concession for the excavation had been given to an archæological mission from America. When protests were made, the only answer was that the firman was from the Sultan himself. The true history of this affair has not been published in full; but one or two Italians of eminence accuse the German Emperor of having exerted his tremendous influence in Constantinople in the case of the Americans, while remaining neutral in the Italian case.

“From the reports of our Consuls,” to quote again from San Giuliano’s statement, “from accounts of visitors returning from those parts, it is fairly manifest that there is a deliberate desire to create an unfriendly *milieu* for all Italian interests, almost as if they mistrusted the growing development of Italian commerce. The attitude of the Ottoman authorities in the Red Sea, and on the Arabian coast of the

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Eritrean colony, has always been overbearing and provocative. It would take too long to recount the whole of the series of incidents in which the Italian flag was insulted. We will cite only a few of those that have occurred under the 'new régime.' On June 5th, 1909, the gunboat *Murahad*, at the distance of forty kilometres from the Turkish coast, took forcible possession of 2,340 thalers which were on board the Italian sambuk (sailing-boat) *Selima*—a veritable act of piracy devoid of extenuating circumstances.

“Recently the incident of the *Genoa* has had a certain notoriety. It was held up by a Turkish gunboat near Hobaida, and subjected to indignities and an attempt at armed appropriation. Animated by a conciliatory spirit, the Italian Government was willing to investigate the incident. The results of the investigation, so far as the local officials were concerned, would have disgraced any civilised Government. Nor was that enough. During the time that the case of the *Genoa* was being investigated, the commander of a Turkish gunboat, on December 5th, 1910, boarded the sambuk *Selima* and obliged the captain to deliver up to him the mail addressed to the merchants of Massowah. High-handed proceedings of equal gravity were

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also taken to the injury of the Eritrean sambuks belonging to Ali Kozem and Kalid Hamed, while the Turkish authorities, who were always glad of a chance to injure the commerce of Eritrea, molested other sambuks on August 21st, 1911. Knowing that they might do so with impunity, the Turkish authorities boarded the Ottoman sambuk *Fath-el-Salem*, which was loaded with goods from Eritrea, beat the captain, threw him into the sea, and abandoned the damaged sail-boat, after having ransacked and annexed the cargo, including the provisions. The Eritrean merchants have been so terrorised by the continual threats coming from the Turkish authorities on the Arabian coast, that they have in great part given up trading. This means a great loss to our colony.

“ In Tripolitania this systematic animosity on the part of the Ottoman authorities assumes even greater proportions, and shows itself now by open and high-handed, now by sly and malevolent, actions. The authorities seem guided by one sole principle, that is to make war against all Italian economic and commercial interests, and to hinder by every possible means the development of Italian influence. Let us cite only a few examples out of a



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long series in order to convince even the most indifferent reader. In Tripolitania the Banco di Roma was instituted with Italian capital, a really beneficent work, calculated to assist the economic progress and civilisation of the country. The authorities forbade the natives to have any dealings with this institution, and in cases of disobedience punished them for some imaginary transgression. The bank was hindered from obtaining legal legislation before local law-courts, and when, after two years of troublesome proceedings, recognition could no longer be refused, the harassing took another form. Although the governing Valis of the Vilayet were being continually changed, the policy remained always the same, until in 1910 the new Vali, Ibrahim Pasha, declared quite frankly to the Administrative Council that he would offer unceasing and systematic resistance against all Italian initiative, and he made it clearly understood that these were the instructions of his Government. Hence all Italian proposals and attempts to obtain concessions such as aqueducts, wireless installation, road-making, etc., were simply rejected. In defiance of our treaties the Turks hindered our subjects from acquiring land and from conducting any other similar operations. At Homs, Bengasi,

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and Derna the natives willing to sell land to the Italians were menaced, and revenge was taken under futile pretexts on those who disobeyed. Contrary to definite agreements, every possible obstacle was put in the way of our archæological and mineralogical missions. The same opposition was raised against all other Italian enterprises, such as mills, oil-presses, and especially against our shipping. The terrorised natives, fearful of the revenges threatened, dare not avail themselves of any of our benevolent institutions or enterprises."

The Banco di Roma, a limited liability concern recently founded in Italy with a large capital of Vatican and Clerical money, professes that its aim is to further Italian commerce with the East, and for this reason, no less than for patriotic reasons—for the directors avow that they are none the less patriots because they are strict Catholics—decided to establish a branch bank in Tripoli. In April 1907 this was opened, and another in the same year at Bengasi. Of course they had to reckon with the obstructive Turk, who put every imaginable and unimaginable obstacle in their way, so that after a great deal of bickering they were forced to buy their property and to carry on their affairs under

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the names of Arab men of straw, who, however, had to be paid well for their services, because of the intimidation of the Turks. They were continually being menaced with the forcible closing of the two banks. The Banco di Roma was thus in a sense obliged to function illegally, and many months passed before it was allowed to put out its escutcheon, the Turks protesting that it was nothing but a political concern. It was only after endless delays and provoking arguments that its existence was officially recognised in a Note exchanged between the Italian Embassy at Constantinople and the Sublime Porte. But that did not mean much, for concurrent with this recognition came orders from Constantinople to the local functionaries to harass the bank in its operations. The Arabs were openly threatened if they did not boycott the bank, and the demeanour of the gendarmes certainly frightened off a good many; but a large and increasing number made use of the bank, visiting it by means of a little secret door, being glad to escape from the yoke of Jewish usury. Not only were Arab and Jewish clients of the bank menaced, but even the subjects of other nations were warned. There ensued obstructions, complications, litigations, revoca-

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tions of trade-permits, denials, and excuses, which at one time nearly overcame the dogged persistence of the bank officials. The bank bought some land from an Italian family, but it was a year and a half before the transfer was ratified. Signor Piazza has described the complicated process to be gone through before an Italian might acquire land, although Arab or other owners were perfectly willing to sell. The first procedure of the Turks was to cast doubt upon the seller's right to the land, which could only be established by a declaration from the religious head of the place. Often this religious head was not to be found, most likely because he was away on a long journey, usually to Mecca. In this particular case of the bank, the Italian Arbib family had to produce in court the man from whom they had bought the land fifteen years before; and when at last they found him, the man admitted alright that he had signed the conveyance, but added: "And I also remember that fifteen years ago, when the Italians made me sign the contract, I was completely drunk!" When all other excuses were exhausted, there came an order from the Vali prohibiting a transfer of land, because it was impossible to allow Europeans to hold land near to fortifica-

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tions. Many a time an Arab who had been pressing an Italian to buy his land would suddenly appear and say that he was very sorry, but his affection for his house was so great that it would be too great a wrench to part with it. He had had the usual little message from the Turks.

The Banco di Roma managed to get two mills erected, one for grinding corn, and the other as an oil-press, but neither were allowed to function for some time, one excuse being that they had been built as barracks for Italian soldiers. Permission to establish a system of electric lighting, to build a light railway, to make roads, or landing-stages for the shipping was refused in a decided manner. As an offset to the Turkish encouragement of the establishment of the Deutsche Levant Linie, the Banco di Roma initiated a line of steamers to serve the ports of Italy, Egypt, and Tripolitania ; but before the Arab merchants could rejoice at this important innovation, the Turks intervened and forced them to boycott the line, and the whole fleet of smaller boats which favoured that trade. It was only after strong protests from the Italian Government that the boycott ceased ; and at a time when meat prices were high in Italy and any relief would have been welcomed, the



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efforts of the Italian traders to ship cattle were effectually nipped in the bud. The traders had already started to buy cattle for export. A big consignment had actually been brought to the coast ready for shipment, but on the morning the cattle were to be taken aboard, there came an *iradé* of the Vali prohibiting the exportation of cattle, and giving as a reason the excuse that the local supply was needed for the maintenance of the troops! An Italian firm began to purchase horses for export, and twenty days afterwards there came another order prohibiting the exportation of horses, which also were required for military purposes!

“From all this it can be clearly deduced” (to quote further from the *communiqué*) “that the Italian Government found itself face to face with a deliberate programme of aversion towards Italian subjects and Italian enterprise in the Ottoman Empire in general, and in Tripolitania in particular. The warm and almost universal sympathy with which Italy greeted the advent to power of the Young Turks, the resolve to give the new régime time to consolidate itself, the wish to create no difficulties or embarrassments to the Ottoman Empire or to Europe, urged her to pursue a policy of patience and leniency



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such as has never yet been seen in the history of nations. Italy hoped for the consolidation of the new régime, for the accepting of good advice, for the acknowledgment of injuries inflicted, for an attitude of friendship, which on our side was carried to the point of sacrificing our own interests.

“But it was all in vain. Every day the situation grew worse : in return for our patient attitude we met in Constantinople either a Government that made promises in sweet words and did not keep them, or a Government devoid of authority, and incapable of forcing obedience on its local authorities ; a Government that lacked the strength to see that its commercial treaties, capitulations, and other obligations were respected and observed ; in a word, a Government which, in regard to Italy, was entirely failing in the fulfilment of its international duties.

“The measure was therefore running over. The violent and unrestricted attacks of the Ottoman Press, the systematic obstructionism, the bad faith of the subordinate officials, the extraordinary number of daily increasing incidents and grievances of every kind, have resulted in rousing and wearying Italian public opinion, as well as the Italian Press and Parliament. Italy has lost all confidence that the questions in dis-

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pute between her and Turkey can be settled in a friendly way. Disillusioned by so many fair words and mendacious promises given her during the past years, she has lost patience, has resolved to put an end to all further tolerance that might be regarded as weakness or the acknowledgment of inferiority, and to exert herself to the utmost to obtain respect for her own rights. The blame for this falls upon those who for the last three years have daily provoked us by small and great incidents, and have created an atmosphere of hostility to us in the various provinces of the Empire, and in particular in Tripolitania, where the safety of our Italian subjects is threatened, and the peaceful development of the commerce of Eritrea in the Red Sea is in danger."

If the peoples of foreign countries remained in ignorance of all this, every foreign Government was perfectly well aware of what was going on. German and Austrian newspapers sympathised with Italy's claim for redress before the outbreak of hostilities and when nobody dreamed that Italy would take such drastic action as she did, and asserted that Turkey could grant much of what Italy desired without loss of dignity. The *Neue Freie Presse* in particular took up Italy's case, and said that Italy's aspira-

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tions had nothing but the most cordial sympathy in Vienna as elsewhere. If, this influential journal argued, the Turkish Government was itself unable to provide for the economical development of Tripolitania, it had no right to put obstacles before Italian initiative, as Italy's aim, it was convinced, was exclusively of an economic character. At any rate, it declared, the Italian Government could not let this deplorable state of things continue. Of course, the declaration of war changed the tune, and the Austrian Press joined in the chorus of condemnation.

Young Turkey, at any rate ever since her advent to supreme power in Constantinople, has been under no delusions respecting Italy's demands in Libya. Along with the strengthening of her Imperial Army she was training an army for Tripoli, and had set about the purchase of a fleet. "The Young Turk," wrote one authority, "is nothing if not a Chauvinist, and he has vented his Chauvinist feelings at the expense of Italy. Crispi would have sent the fine Italian fleet to Smyrna last year if recent events had occurred in his day. Even the more cautious Signor Tittoni, when he was Minister of Foreign Affairs, threatened to send it to Mitylene." On many

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occasions *Tanin*, the organ of the Young Turks, was exasperatingly oracular about the Italian theme, and as a matter of fact, long before the inauguration of actual fighting, there prevailed a state of diplomatic war between the two countries. But to such an extent did the Turks carry their contempt for Italy, that although they were certainly strengthening the fortifications along the coast, and that in defiance of Italy's protests, yet they sent only a few thousand more troops over to Libya to reinforce the existing garrison. They affected to assume that Italy was bluffing, and counted upon having a well-trained Arab army in existence to meet the Italian attack when it did come. For, of course, they knew that it would inevitably come some day. It was as great a shock to the Young Turk, however, as it was to the Old World in general, when Italy, through her Foreign Minister, San Giuliano, sent her ultimatum on the night of September 26, with a peremptory request for an answer within twenty-four hours.

## CHAPTER III

### THE POLITICAL NECESSITY

TRIPOLI was a vital political necessity to Italy. This is the important consideration conscientious critics are bound to face. Of course even if some of those newspaper moralists who were suddenly seized with such zeal for righteousness had been in full possession of all the facts, they might still have refused to admit that Italy's grievances against Turkey amounted to much, and still have concurred with the *Times* remark, that they "hardly afford an adequate explanation of such drastic action." But this assumption that Italy's recital of her case against the Turks in Tripoli, strong as that case undoubtedly is, constitutes the only ground for the expedition, is most unwarrantable, in fact a sign of appalling obtuseness and inexcusable ignorance. This is the gnat at which the British Peace Society is straining when, above the signature of sundry pacifist peers, it circulates a manifesto

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among the legal fraternity of Italy disputing the matter on a point of law. But when a Peace journal asserts that "Turkey and humanity are synonymous terms," ought we any longer to take these people seriously? for it really seems as if, like Providence, the Peace Society is always to be found on the side of the big battalions. These benevolent people remain comparatively quiescent when, under the cover of diplomacy, the big Powers ride roughshod over lesser nationalities. They are still dallying with the doctrine of original sin, and, with a touching faith, are seeking to change the wicked hearts of men; but they rigidly set their faces against any study of the enormous economic factors at work in modern world evolution. They can only think of war in terms of battleships, bullets, and bayonets, and the war of diplomacy leaves them complacently unaffected. It is only when the cannon booms that they realise war is going on; and, even though the first to fire be a long-suffering victim who has been forced to do so in self-defence, woe be unto it when the preachers of the Peace Society join the enemy. But some day perhaps even the pacifists will realise that Italy is fighting not only to put an end to an intolerable persecution, but also for



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her very existence as a nation and as a Power to be respected. The Socialist Labriola, in rebuking the German Socialists for their unreasoned condemnation of Italy, wrote: "My German friends who in this matter talk about Imperialistic capitalism hungry for prey do not understand that we are engaged in a life and death struggle for our right to the Mediterranean; that we are not to be driven out of our own sea; and that we are really combating Mammon, whose Fatherland is a bag of scudi." There rarely has been a war in which "capitalism" played so small a part, in which the overwhelming, urgent reason was so purely political.

"Historical fatality" was the way the Prime Minister, Giolitti, expressed it when he spoke at the Turin Exhibition two or three days after the outbreak of hostilities. It is a remarkable thing, by the way, that there has been very little public reference to the war made by responsible Ministers. There has been nothing said by them even to explain or to justify to outsiders the position taken up by Italy. Following the example of Giolitti, there has only been a brief and dignified statement of the political and economic necessity for the expedition, that there can be no compromise, and that any drawing

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back or failure to take this opportunity would be to stultify her nationality. The Prime Minister's brief statement was that "foreign policy cannot, like home policy, depend entirely upon the will of the Government and Parliament, but of absolute necessity must take into account events and situations which it is not in our power to modify, or even, sometimes, to accelerate or retard. There are facts which take the shape of fatality from which a nation cannot escape without irreparably compromising its future. In such moments it is the duty of the Government to assume every responsibility, since the least hesitation or delay may mean the beginning of political decadence, fraught with consequences that the nation may be left to deplore for long years, even for centuries. The Ministry acknowledges the responsibility it has incurred in engaging the country in this struggle, but it faces that responsibility with equanimity, because it is convinced that, in view of the persistent and systematic hostility which has for years hindered our economic activity in Tripolitania, and in view of the constant provocations offered by the Turkish Government, any hesitation or delay would have compromised both the honour of the country and its political and economic position."

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There are young enthusiasts in Italy who are laying the flattering unction to their souls that it is their recent agitation of the dry bones of Italian foreign politics that has brought about what is termed Italy's salvation ; but the Tripoli problem is really very much older in years than many of these ardent patriots. While it is true that the ups and downs of politics have militated against a continuity of foreign policy, yet the tradition of Italy's rights to Tripoli has been handed down from one Cabinet to another. And, indeed, who has better rights to North Africa than the country which stretches her whole length into the Mediterranean and is within a hundred miles of the North African littoral? Her soldiers discovered her title-deeds to Tripoli the other day at Ain-Zara when, in hastily digging their trenches, they laid bare the most beautiful mosaics, works of their Roman forbears under whom that country flourished like a beautiful garden. This discovery had a profound effect upon the Italian troops. " Viva Roma Immortale!" they cried ; their unbounded joy, the real artistic sense they displayed, and the affectionate care with which they excavated and then decorated the place with palisades and palm leaves, was something moving to those fortunate enough to be present. It was truly a case of

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Italy coming into her own, of the Young Italians, now of age, coming out to redeem the family estates.

“North Africa will return to Italy.” These words were spoken by no other than Mazzini long before Italy became a united and independent nation. “It has been ours once, and it must be ours again,” he said. Bismarck spoke of “the Mediterranean, that wonderful inter-continental harbour of Europe, Asia, and Africa, that channel between the Atlantic and the Pacific, that basin which is surrounded by the fairest countries in the world,” and said that Italy and France could never become allies, because the Mediterranean was an “indivisible heritage.” “It belongs undoubtedly to Italy, whose Mediterranean shores are twelve times as extensive as are the Mediterranean shores of France.” Bismarck had years before also written to Mazzini that the rule of the Mediterranean must be the constant idea of Italy. Of course we now know what Bismarck’s little game was. It suited his policy to play off Italy against France, and at the slightest sign of a *rapprochement* between the two countries he had only to expatiate on the beauties of the Mediterranean to set them by the ears again. As subsequent events showed, he had no more use

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for Italy than to make of her a catspaw ; and that is about the only rôle Italy has played in foreign politics up till now, not only in the service of Germany, but of other countries as well. The Crispi letters, just published, are very illuminating on this point. But in those days Bismarck had to keep his eye upon Austria as well, and when Crispi was his guest he said that " if Austria takes Bosnia, Italy should take Albania or some other Turkish territory on the Adriatic." Thus, as the Turks complained, it is obvious that the spoliation of their empire was agreed upon long ago by the concert of Europe.

The Crispi letters throw considerable light on the Tripoli question. As early as 1877 Lord Derby gave every encouragement to Italy's claim to Tripoli. He urged her to occupy Tripoli straightway. In his opinion this was absolutely essential in order to safeguard the common interests of Britain and Italy in the Mediterranean. France obtained *carte blanche* in Tunisia, very much to Italy's dismay ; and Crispi, although not very enthusiastically supported at home, became very active to secure compensation. In fulfilment of a promise made by Lord Salisbury, Tripolitania was the subject of " conversations " at the Congress of Berlin, and again British sympathy was given and Italy's

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rights acknowledged ; but the only definite outcome was that France became more firmly ensconced in Tunis, and Italy got nothing. Crispi, while in London in 1882, wrote home to his Minister : " England needs a military ally in Egypt, and she would be glad if that ally were Italy. If Italy refuses, England will make some concessions to France, and then will happen what I wrote to you yesterday—France, consolidated in Tunis, will ask permission to take Tripoli. The Mediterranean will be closed to us." He felt that by France's energetic action Italy had been robbed of Tunis, which lies within a hundred miles of her coast; was established by Italians, and looked upon as a natural colony for Italy. Crispi, however, was bound to accept the *fait accompli*, and admit that the error he attributed to the weakness of Cairoli and the Italian Government could not be repaired ; but he became seriously alarmed over Tripolitania, when France, without any opposition, was allowed to occupy Biserta, and to establish an arsenal and a fleet there. He tried to make the British Government understand that unless opposition were offered by the Allied Powers to France, she would also occupy Tripolitania. " We wish to proceed in harmony with the friendly Cabinets," he wrote, " but we are



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resolved to use every means in our power to prevent Italy from being overwhelmed." He was most urgent, in a letter to Lord Salisbury, that, "if we had Tripoli, Biserta would cease to be a menace both to Italy and to Great Britain."

In reply to this, Crispi received a telegram from the Italian *chargé d'affaires* in London to this effect: "Your Excellency's letter has produced a profound impression upon Lord Salisbury. His Lordship will shortly reply to you in writing, but for the present he has charged me to telegraph you that he is convinced that it is absolutely essential that, the day on which the *status quo* in the Mediterranean is altered in the smallest particular, Tripolitania should be occupied by Italy. The Italian occupation must be effected independently of events in Egypt, that is to say, whether Egypt remains in British hands or in the hands of the Sultan. This occupation is required by European interests to hinder the Mediterranean from becoming a French lake. The only question to be examined is whether this is the opportune moment." Salisbury's counsel was "Wait!" And he added that the Italian Government would some day most surely get possession of Tripolitania, but "the hunter, in order to shoot a stag, must wait until he gets within range,

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so that if it be only wounded, it does not escape him."

It will be seen that from England Crispi got a great deal of sympathy, but precious little promise of tangible support ; and, as usual, Germany would have been only too delighted to see Italy check French expansion, but was not risking anything herself. Crispi kept steadily at work, however. He was sanguine that Tripolitania might become Italian without any opposition on the part of the Powers, who, all of them at different epochs, had recognised Italy's superior rights to those regions. He did not wish for political reasons to break with Turkey, but he was alive even to that contingency. In the meantime he prepared the ground by seeking to gain for Italy the sympathy and the support of the indigenous population of Tripolitania. With this purpose in view he sent out Cav. Grande as the Italian Consul-General. Grande worked very sagaciously to further the cause of his Minister. In a cipher telegram sent to Crispi, he said he had profited by the fact that Sid Hassuna Karamanli was in Tripoli at the behest of the Governor-General, and had taken the opportunity to have him spoken to by an intimate and mutual friend. " Sid Hassuna showed himself disposed to assist

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the Italian occupation, as he is convinced that if we do not, others will occupy Tripolitania. He said he could dispose of all the forces of the mountain population, as he enjoyed their sympathy. In order to prepare the ground, time and money are needed, not for himself, but for the sheiks. He would accept a form of government like that of Tunis. This, he said, would silence the opposition of the Arabs and pacify the country. He did not disguise the fact that there would be a resistance on the part of the Turks. However, not being seconded by the Arabs, they would cede to the Italian forces. He begs that we should exercise the greatest prudence, because he is watched by the Governor-General. He says the country is weary of Turkish occupation. Karamanli showed that he understood the political situation of Africa, and how to take advantage of the favourable occasion."

The editor of these letters, Signor T. Palamenghi-Crispi, remarks that, sure of the adhesion of the greater part of England, of Germany, and of Austria in the matter of the Italian occupation of Tripoli, Crispi could easily have gained also the consent of France on the basis of the defence of Italian interests in Tunis until an understanding had been arrived at. As to Turkey,

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under the old régime the negotiations would have been carried through without any difficulty. The Sultan was an astute politician, and was alive to his responsibility, and the precarious condition of his empire. Accordingly, he would have adapted himself to the inevitable, comforting himself with other compensations. But in January 1891 Crispi went out of office, and his policy was pigeon-holed.

The weakness of which Crispi complained in his country's foreign policy was responsible for Italy's failure to join hands with Great Britain when she intervened in Egypt in 1882. Notwithstanding that she had been browbeaten into the Triple Alliance by Bismarck, she was still afraid to risk any serious outburst on the part of France, who on the other hand had not the slightest compunction in pushing forward in North Africa at the expense of Italy's hoped-for inheritance there. This naturally resulted in a reaction of public opinion in Italy, and her relations with France were not improved, of course, by the tariff war between the two countries. So that there was more of a spirit of revenge, or a desire to snatch compensation, rather than any sense of wisdom, displayed in the Italian Government's decision to occupy Massowah and the surrounding

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territories on the Red Sea. This proved to be a most unfortunate enterprise, and ended in the disaster at Adowa. Again Italy suffered for her willingness to play the part of catspaw. Writing in 1901, Messrs. Thomas Okey and Bolton King declared that "for thirty years past, it has been the policy of the English Government to use Italy for its own purposes, and our recent attitude in particular has, in spite of the Alliance, left a good deal of soreness. The Italians reproach us that we pushed them into the African fiasco, that we gave them little thanks for holding Kassala to facilitate our advance up the Nile; they complain that the Anglo-French Agreement on the North African Hinterland has bartered away their dormant claims to Tripoli, which would be valueless without the trade routes to the interior."

Great was the bitterness over Adowa, and Italy appeared to have definitely decided that she was not fitted to be a colonising Power. She was painfully aware of her fallen prestige, and her excessive conscientiousness caused her to accept as well deserved all the contempt which other countries did not trouble to conceal. But instead of reverting to the old ways, in which duties to the nation were lost sight of in the petty

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squabbles and intrigues of party politics, she set herself to carry out a vigorous house-cleaning. Not only were substantial measures of social reform enacted, but she was also able to pull her finances out of the quagmire into which they had sunk, and to re-establish her national credit in a way that astonished the world. It has been, and is still, the fashion to abuse the Government for having listened too much to the Socialists, and having placated them by giving their whole attention to internal affairs at the cost of foreign affairs. This is flattering the Socialists by ascribing to them an influence which they themselves hardly dared to believe they possessed. Yet there is no doubt that but for the steady, unobtrusive work done at home Tripoli certainly would not have been Italian to-day, and, in view of the way in which the other Powers are on the prowl in the Mediterranean, would probably never have been Italian at all. It is easy to shout for war, but, without the financial resources, it is a waste of breath. This was forgotten by many zealous and impatient Italians, but there is now a growing recognition of the services of the men whose genius provided the sinews of war.

The economic factor was at work in another way. A country like Italy, which possessed a



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most prolific population, and a large part of which was ill-suited for agriculture, as it lacked the more important minerals which are the first essentials of industrial development, was bound to feel keenly the necessity for expansion. The hemorrhage of emigration was inevitable, and the torrent could not be stopped. In 1909 alone, no less than 625,637 Italian people left the homeland on a quest for the work which means bread. As Giustiano Rossi wrote some time ago, "Leaving aside the political and commercial considerations which in themselves are sufficient to counsel colonial expansion if we do not wish to be closed in an iron ring, human considerations alone impose upon those of us who cannot procure a certain livelihood in the Fatherland, the duty of finding it abroad. Italy is too small to hold her sons. It is therefore necessary to find a regular outlet for this exuberance, if we wish to avoid the congestion which socially resolves itself into violent convulsions. Our emigrants are exploited in all foreign lands, while the emigrants of other nations are sent out to exploit their own colonies."

Tripoli was quite a different enterprise from Italy's previous attempts at colonising. Tunis was gone for ever, but the contiguous coasts of

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Tripoli and Cyrenaica offered an outlet for Italy's energies, and the problem of the "Mezzogiorno" would be in a fair way towards solution with the Southern Italians going to a climate and vegetation similar to their own. The caravan trade from the Hinterland was possibly gone beyond recall, sucked away into Tunis and Egypt; still there was the country left, with all its possibilities for founding a fairly prosperous agricultural and cattle-raising colony, and thereby relieving the pressure of population in the homeland. As Labriola declared, "The national instinct which, I think with reason, was opposed to the unnecessary Abyssinian enterprise, has, on the contrary, applauded the Tripoli initiative, because it saw in it the realisation of a definite ethnical exigency." And so Italy waited patiently, with a clear understanding with France and England, and her claims duly registered and acknowledged, perfectly satisfied to pursue her policy of peaceful penetration and to advance her legitimate economic interests until the day when the inevitable disintegration of the Ottoman Empire should cause Tripoli to fall like a ripe apple into her lap.

The day arrived, however, sooner than Italy expected. The whole question of the Mediterranean and North Africa was thrown into the

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melting-pot by Germany's precipitate despatch of the *Panther* to Agadir. And Italy very nearly lost her opportunity. She was not moved to strike at the moment she did, by any thought of compensating herself for being out of the Moroccan deal, but the *Panther* incident showed Germany's heavy-mailed fist in a very ugly light. This fact, coupled with that of Germany's growing influence at the Porte, and the granting of favours to Germans in Cyrenaica, lent colour to the report that an arrangement had been concluded for the *Panther's* successor at Agadir to go to Tobruk. Italy's "political necessity" was plain. However willing she might have been to continue parleying with Turkey over her grievances, she could not allow herself to be "jockeyed" out of Tripolitania by Germany. Whatever grounds there were for the talk about Germany going to Tobruk, Italy was justified in her decision to take no risks. Sir Harry Johnston says, in the *Nineteenth Century*: "I may as well be frank and say that I have met with not a few Germans influentially placed in the commercial and political world, who, in putting aside as impracticable an actual German protectorate over Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, have sought to satisfy a very legitimate longing

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to found a vast German Empire in the undeveloped regions of the world, by projecting such a dominion to commence with Tripoli on the North and to finish with German South-West Africa on the South." "For some months prior to the Italian expedition to Tripoli," writes the Vienna correspondent of the *Times*, "the German Foreign Office was credited with cherishing a plan for the creation of such German interests in Tripoli and Cyrenaica as would form a title to territorial 'compensations' whenever Italian claims to Tripoli should be realised. The promptness of Italian action precluded, however, the creation of another Agadir in the South-Eastern Mediterranean."

The intense irritation caused in Germany by Italy's drastic action was, under the circumstances, perfectly understandable. As Dr. Dillon said, in writing from Constantinople to the *Contemporary*, "Germany was being hoist with her own petard, and she disliked it. She would gladly have leased or occupied Tobruk herself, if circumstances had been propitious. It was gall and wormwood to her to let Turkey be mutilated and humbled by Italy, whose aggression would damage the Triple Alliance in the estimation of the world and compromise each of these

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partners in the eyes of the Young Turks." It was quite natural that after her many good services to the Porte, in checking the French rectification of the Tunisian-Tripoli boundary, and after the Kaiser's proclamation from the housetops of his friendship for the Sultan, Germany should have expected some such *quid pro quo* as a coaling-station on the Tripoli coast. And not only had Italy brought disaster to her policy in the Mediterranean, but at a time when, as we now know, Germany was on the verge of war with France and England, here was one of her pledged allies going off to war on its own account, without regard as to whether Germany might need the loan of the Italian army herself.

But the attitude of the British in this crisis, as exhibited in their Press, was greatly obfuscating to the Italians, who had understood that Great Britain was tacitly with them in their action. As we have seen from the Crispi correspondence, official Britain has been cognisant of Italy's claims on Tripolitania for the last thirty years, and has encouraged them. Yet when baited in the House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey gave no inkling that the British Government knew anything at all about the business, and gave somewhat frigid assurances of strict

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neutrality. Events, however, showed that, of all the Powers, Britain was most keenly alive to the situation. It goes without saying that the Germans in Cyrenaica would have been a menace to the Suez and a disaster to British influence in the Mediterranean. And if the eyes of shrewd observers did not deceive them, Great Britain had herself taken pretty good precautions against such a contretemps. In fact, had not the Italian navy appeared off the Tripoli coast at the moment it did, it would possibly have been discovered that British boats had assumed the protection of Cyrenaica. It is known that there was intense activity in the naval yard at Malta, and a rather dramatic incident also illustrated Britain's preparedness. During the night when the Italian men-of-war appeared off Tripoli, and were awaiting orders, there was an alarm given, and strange boats were reported travelling at great speed and without lights. One after another, black, low-lying craft swept along until six had gone by into the darkness. By wireless telegraphy a destroyer farther up the line was told off to intercept the strangers and report. The reply came in a few minutes that the mysterious craft were unmistakably British destroyers steaming full speed in the direction of Malta. This story



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the writer gives for what it is worth, and just as he heard it from eye-witnesses with the Italian fleet. Naturally, the incident caused some perturbation until it became clear that, once they had made sure that Italy was attending to her business all right, the British watch-dogs saw no further need for their services. But in view of all this, the hackneyed "bolt from the blue" so freely employed by the Press shows how really opaque is the ignorance of the British people concerning its own foreign affairs.

As for France, her friendship was tested by Italy not so long ago, and found to ring true. A definite agreement was come to with France ten years ago which recognised Italian rights in Tripoli, and, the tariff war having come to an end, there soon grew up a strong friendship between the two Latin countries. As Clemenceau said the other day, "Italy deliberately ranged herself on our side at the Algeciras Conference, and, as the first Power to adhere to the new Franco-German Agreement, she unquestionably acted in a spirit of friendship and goodwill. We have every inducement to return to a policy of friendship which is entirely to the advantage of both countries." "Nobody in Europe" (to quote a characteristic utterance of the *Temps*,

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the organ of the Foreign Office in Paris) "is unaware of the aims of Italy in Tripoli. We are sufficiently well off in Northern Africa not to desire to extend ourselves at least on the East." Moreover, it is not for France, this organ said, to be zealous for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. A kind of semi-official protector of the Sultan—meaning Emperor William—has for some years, according to the French paper again, appeared in international affairs. "He is an ally of Italy. He has not been and never will be an ally of ours. We shall not play his game against Italy any more than we have chosen to do against England, for Italy is our sister by blood, and has not a single interest irreconcilable with ours. We have neither fear nor hesitation in taking note of Italy's ambitions or in admitting them, and we take no umbrage at the thought of some day having Italians for neighbours in Africa." This seemingly inspired utterance in so influential a Paris paper caused some stir in Europe at the time, and it has never been repudiated as an expression of diplomatic policy.

American opinion, being so far away and also so ill-informed, was of a very varied character. One prominent organ declared that Italy had not only been patient, but ignobly patient. "Italy is the

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instrument of justice and of judgment against the high-piled iniquities of the Turk. The hour has struck for the exit of this barbaric people from the continent of Christian civilisation." The *New York Times* remarked that "anybody can see that the procedures of Italy in Tripoli follow a host of historic precedents, and that they are merely the working out of destiny. The dying nations must yield as the living nations press forward." But not a few of the American journals joined in the cry about "naked pillage" and "brigandage" and the breaking of treaties, regardless of the fact that it is the bigger Powers and not Italy who are to blame for treaties being at a discount. To Mr. Roosevelt is attributed the candid confession that a treaty is not worth the paper it is written on, if either of the signatories wants to go to war; and Bismarck brought dismay to the hearts of the pacifists by a similar pronouncement: "All contracts between great States cease to be unconditionally binding as soon as they are tested by the struggle for existence. No great nation will ever be induced to sacrifice its existence on the altar of fidelity."

Italy is charged with the violation of the Treaty of Paris, 1856, which guaranteed the integrity of Turkey, and it would be "to laugh"

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if this charge were not made in quarters entitled to respect. But it only requires a few moments' reflection to see that Articles 7 and 8 had already been rendered a dead letter by the action of one of the other signatories. Every signatory to that treaty had known for years of Italy's claims, and could have offered mediation, but even Turkey made no appeal to the treaty before the outbreak of the war. What outcry was there when Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina and helped on the disintegration of Turkey? It was then that the Treaty of Paris was rendered null and void, and to resurrect it against Italy now is really to trifle. The bullying attitude adopted by certain "men of peace" towards Italy would have been more *à propos* if it had been directed against Austria when she was busy annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina, but there was then no demand for the British fleet to go and teach the "brigands" a sharp lesson.

"We must not be too preoccupied by the talk of taking away some territory from the Great Dying Man," wrote Giustiano Rossi. "After all, the pieces that have been taken away from the Ottoman Empire are now many, and nevertheless Europe does not fall into convulsions. First Bulgaria was subtracted and liberated from Ottoman

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servitude; next Greece, and afterwards Roumania, Serbia, and Montenegro enlarged themselves at the cost of the Turkish Empire. England added to her crown the diadem of Cyprus. Austria took Bosnia and Herzegovina. Tunis, under a pretext, was placed under the protectorate of France. Finally, Crete rebelled and was governed independently of Turkey by the mandate of the several European Powers. Crete in some years' time will be quietly annexed by Greece. Next will come the turn of Albania; why not that of Macedonia? What share has Italy had to-day of this pulling to pieces of Turkey? Nothing. And we shall have nothing if we wait until others give it to us. Let us therefore go to Tripoli."

"Diplomaticus," in the course of his *Fortnightly* dissection of Sir Edward Grey, joins the attack upon Italy, speaks of her "scandalous foray," and condemns her for her utter disregard of treaties. He says: "The sanctions of order and equity in international life are gone. All restraints of honour and good faith have disappeared, and the predatory instincts of the larger States only await their opportunity." That is exactly the opinion that Italy has been arriving at to her dismay, although it is generally conceded that she has been one of the most

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enthusiastic supporters of treaties and arbitration. The discussion now going on as to whether it was France or Germany who upset the Mediterranean *status quo* concerns her very little. The naked fact confronting her was that the *status quo* had been upset; and that she must act accordingly. It is a truly formidable list, terrible to contemplate, that the *Fortnightly welt-politik* writer gives us of the treaties which have been violated, from Japan in Korea, America in the Panama, down to Morocco; but one fails to understand why upon Italy's devoted head should be poured all the blame now that the significance of these things is at last being discovered. Every other nation appears to be guilty of burglary, except Italy, but when she takes the precaution to prevent some "predatory" Power from cracking another crib, she is accused of subverting all principles of international honour—surely a cowardly attitude to take up.

It is with genuine respect for Sir Thomas Barclay's reputation in international law that one turns to his discussion of the problems of this war, because it purports to be an impartial examination of both sides of the case. But if Sir Thomas had been definitely "briefed" for



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Turkey he could hardly have displayed a greater partiality ; to include a chapter by a Mussulman full of feeling against Italy—intelligible, perhaps, as that feeling may be—is a peculiar way of disclaiming such partiality. His little homily, by the way, on how the French Parliament always keeps a close watch on the conduct of its foreign affairs, and insists upon being kept *au courant*, reads strangely in view of the disclosure of the secret “carryings-on” of Cailaux with Germany.

The burden of Sir Thomas Barclay’s case against Italy is that she ruthlessly tore up the Treaty of Paris, by which the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was guaranteed. It seems necessary to reiterate that Italy was fully justified in considering that the Treaty of Paris was absolutely torn to shreds by Austria’s annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the acquiescence of the European Powers. To deny that the annexation of these ex-Turkish provinces had any bearing on particular political interests in the Mediterranean is really to trifle. It is quite true that in 1856 the Powers guaranteed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and stated that they would “consider any act having the character of a violation thereof as a question of general interest”;

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but in 1911 the Powers, by their strict attitude of neutrality, appear to have changed their minds, and to have very little compunction about the fate of the Ottoman Empire, at least outside of Europe. Thus, Italy has in these declarations of neutrality the tacit encouragement of the Powers, and it is the Powers and not Italy that the lovers of Turkey should attack with their big sticks and law-books. And then they will get the answer straight, that the presence of the Turkish Government in Europe is a curse, and that, but for their own petty jealousies, the Powers would have isolated the "Sick Man" long ago, for the sake of the health not only of the Macedonians, but of the whole continent as well. "When decay has proceeded for so long a period," says Mr. Bryce, "and is so plainly due to deep-seated maladies, there remains no hope that decay can be arrested." He talks of "facilitating, with as little strife and bloodshed as may be, that extinction of the Ottoman Empire which is plainly inevitable," and adds that "Britain, France, and Italy have no interest in a policy of delay in the breaking up of Turkey."

The other Powers had led Italy to believe that the disintegration of Turkey was a consummation devoutly to be desired by the whole civilised

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world. The forces of disintegration were already silently at work. Why then should Italy have been expected to show any compunction in accelerating this disintegration, especially when it was at the same time a matter of saving her own people from being plundered and shot and imprisoned without cause, and of providing an opportunity and outlet for the enormous surplus energy of Young Italy?

We can deplore with Sir Thomas that there is a tendency to have recourse to the soldier rather than to the lawyer, with the consequent consignment of the Hague Tribunal to the scrap-heap of unused, if not useless, machinery; yet we must face the sinister but undeniable fact, that as things stand to-day, neither England, nor Germany, nor Russia, nor France would hesitate to tear up all the treaties in existence if they considered their vital national interests threatened. To speak about the "peaceful solution of the Franco-German difficulty" as setting "an example to the world" how to avoid war, is to run risks of not being taken seriously. There would have been no peaceful solution had either of these countries found itself placed in the predicament Italy found herself in; if, as was the case with Italy, they had serious cause to fear that their

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very existence as a nation was being jeopardised. Nobody, by the way, appears to have considered the feelings of the Moors.

Italy may be permitted to know best the dangers which beset her, and not all the clauses of all the Conventions of the Hague appeared strong enough to guard her against the danger which threatened her recently. In view of the "Pan"-this and "Pan"-the-other Empire schemes now being pushed forward with a cynical disregard for the rights of weaker nationalities; in view of what is taking place in Persia and in China, the blame for the bankruptcy of the Hague Tribunal should be laid at other doors than Italy's. Is it of no significance to Italy that her old and inveterate enemy is pushing towards Salonika? Had the dismissal of General Conrad nothing to do with the anti-Italian campaign? Was it for nought that Italy found it advisable to send her rawest recruits to Tripoli, and strengthen her garrison with her best troops on the Austrian frontier? Could Italy afford to be blind to the unscrupulous methods adopted to drive Count Aehrenthal from office, because of his pro-Italian sympathies? To discuss the Tripoli campaign as if it were an isolated incident, and having no connection

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with Italy's bigger problems, is to put oneself entirely out of court.

The Tripoli expedition meant more to Italy than merely securing a colony in North Africa. But even if this had been her sole purpose, no one can deny that Italy has the best right of any to colonies in the Mediterranean, and this right was made an absolute necessity when other Powers took advantage of Italy's weakness or unwillingness, and set about colonising there with a barefaced unconcern for any one else. Italy had to assert herself or to go under. There are certain people who affect to ridicule the idea that Italy is threatened in any way, that there is any *malprepense* towards Italy in the big empire schemes of the other countries. But granting for the moment that that may be so, and that nobody has a direct quarrel with or definite design against Italy, yet the inevitable consequences of this big empire building will be to close up Italy and make her a prisoner in her own sea; the "iron ring" about her will be contracted and forged afresh. Morals perhaps do not count for much in the present slicing up of the earth, but on what moral grounds is Italy to be excluded when the sharing out is being done? The most approved practice

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now is for one country to stake out a claim, and then for the other colonising Powers to demand compensation ; and bargains are thus struck. In order to bring about some sort of homogeneity in its colonies, one country usually offers to buy out the other Powers who have contiguous claims, and a substantial *quid pro quo* is given. But if a nation like Italy ventures to ask where she "comes in" regarding compensation, her action is treated as an outrageous piece of impertinence, and something to be put down with a firm hand. There is, however, an unmistakable change in tone in the criticism of Italy's action, since it has been discovered that Italy looks like "making good." But this fact makes it still clearer that the other Powers treated Italy in the past with such scant courtesy, and oftentimes with ill-conceived contempt, simply because she possessed a weak army and a navy not worth its salt.

Before Italy could set about her big task of defending her nationality it was necessary first of all to regain her own self-respect, and then to force everybody else to respect her. This could never have been done had she allowed Germany or any other Power to take Tripolitania, after all the years that Italy's exclusive rights to it had been universally admitted. The Abyssinian



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disaster would have been but a small affair compared with the loss of prestige she would have suffered had she kept quiet when within a matter of perhaps a few hours she would most probably have been forestalled. It is hardly necessary to say that the whole army has been smarting with shame for the disgrace of Adowa, and eager to strike a blow for Italy that would wipe out that disgrace ; and the nationalists were of course loud in their condemnation of the inactivity of foreign affairs, and extremely active in their efforts to rouse the nation to a sense of its responsibilities and dangers. But when the German *Panther* arrived off Morocco, and the subsequent "conversations" made it apparent that, despite treaties and alliances, the game of grab was to be carried on as fiercely as ever, it did not need the impatience of the army nor the preachings of the patriots to stir the country's blood and to acquire that force of public opinion which is essential to the success of every national undertaking. That other people were ignorant of what was taking place in Italy is due solely to the fact that they were too engrossed in their own selfish designs to be concerned about others ; but certainly the Italian Government had unmistakable proofs that it was backed up by

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the will of the nation. The North and South forgot their differences ; the political parties sunk their quarrels ; and rich and poor were unanimous in their agreement that the hour had come for Italy to retrieve something of her ancient glory. Even a large number of the Socialists found that they were Italian first and Socialists afterwards. And when the army had gone to Tripoli and they saw that war was unavoidable, the other Socialists, who had tried to avert hostilities, declared with Salvemini that "it is now necessary, whatever sacrifice it costs, that the country must come out of this enterprise with honour ; and whoever contributes even in the smallest part to render failure possible, or rather to render its success less secure, commits an atrocious crime against the Fatherland." And if foreigners wonder how all this came about, they have only to come to Italy, and learn something of Austrian diplomatic manœuvring in the Balkans, of the pretty story of Albania, and of the Pan-Germanic question in general. Then they will realise how the nationality of Italy is being threatened, and how necessary it was for her to assert herself. They will learn that Italy's difficulties are only just beginning, that the future is fraught with dangers that might well daunt the spirit of an older

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nation. They will learn too that Young Italy is preparing to meet the future calmly and efficiently, and with a self-confidence in which there is not a particle of conceit, for the times are too serious for swashbuckling and braggadocio.

How far Italy has succeeded in her present object and guaranteed an outlet for her energies and expansion, it is too early to say. It is beyond dispute that she has broken the "iron ring" in such a manner that it will take a great deal of welding to mend it again. But the chief thing is that she has discovered herself. What has happened in Italy has been likened to a general resurrection, the waking of a nation, from a long paralytic torpor. "What shall be our answer to puritanical England, to pietistic Austria, to innocent Germany?" demands the *Tribuna*. "Nothing, except that Italy has grown up, and, notwithstanding her friendships, is going to rely upon herself." Italy's prestige to-day is a hundred per cent. higher than it was in September.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE NEW COLONY

Whoever comes too late to beautiful Libya,  
When the land is being divided up,  
I say he will bitterly rue it.

*From* HERODOTUS.

IT is safe to say that very few of the people who were in a breathless hurry to condemn Italy knew exactly where Tripoli was. Political geography is not a strong point with most people. There is some excuse for them, for Tripolitania had not yet been opened up to civilisation by Thomas Cook & Son. And as there had been no discovery of precious stones and metals, there were no cosmopolitan financiers urging war for the right to start gold and diamond mines. Very likely if there had been, Italy would have been left behind. In the public mind there was just a vague idea of half a dozen squalid overgrown villages on the sea-coast, with that great forbidding unknown, the Libyan Desert, lying behind. The classics spoke of Libya as a land

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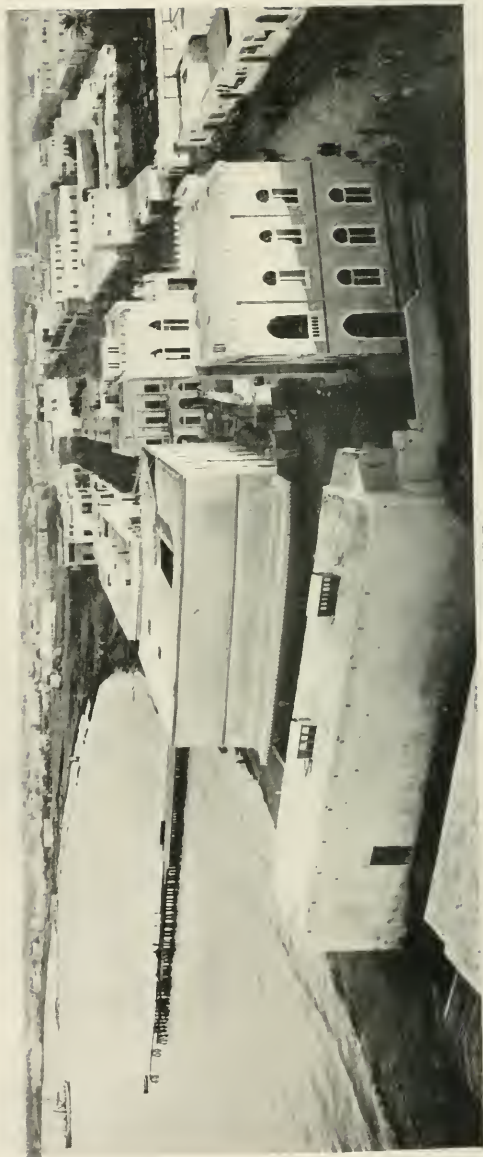
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flowing with milk and honey ; but the men with money, who are generally the pioneers in colonisation, are not as a rule distinguished for their classical erudition, and in any case milk and honey offer few temptations. One cannot rhapsodise in a prospectus about anything so prosaic.

For reasons of their own, the Turks discouraged advertisement of Tripoli, and with their well-known methods successfully prevented any effective exploration of the country. And so, except for one or two accounts of the voyages of several daring explorers, Tripolitania and its resources remain practically unknown. Tripolitania, or Libya, as the Italian Government has decided it shall be renamed, is the easternmost of the Barbary States of North Africa, and stretches from Tunis to the undefined Egyptian boundary, and extends in the south into the vaguely known Libyan Desert beyond Fezzan. Its area is roughly estimated at three times the size of Italy, which has 286,682 square kilometres, as compared with the approximate 1,051,000 of Tripolitania. "Eloquent figures," these were called, the writer remembers, by an enterprising Milanese shopman who posted them in a window, evidently a praiseworthy effort to get the people to "think Imperially." Tunisia has 167,400, Algeria







TRIPOLI.

The newer part of the town, looking from the Castle.

890,000, and Morocco 439,240 square kilometres. All that is known of the mountainous region is indicated on the map.

The history of the new colony is about as vague as its topography. We get as far back as the Phœnicians, from whom it was wrested by the rulers of Barca (Cyrenaica), who in turn had to give it up to the Carthaginians, and they to the Romans. About the third century A.D., because of its three cities Oea, Sabrata, and Leptis, the Romans gave it the name of Regio Tripolitana. It was probably raised to the rank of a separate province by Septimus Severus, who was a native of Leptis. Like the rest of North Africa it was overrun by the Arabs in the eighth century.

About Cyrenaica or Barca, a little more is known, because of the vast ruins existing to-day, which tell of the glories of its past civilisation. Cyrene, its capital, was founded in 631 B.C., by a colony of Spartans under Battus, whose dynasty ruled for nearly two centuries. The story as told by Herodotus is that Battus had an impediment in his speech, and on applying to the Oracle at Delphi for a cure, was directed to lead a colony to Libya. He returned after two years, and complained that the colony had met with disappointment.

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As a matter of fact they had been all the time on the island of Platea, when they thought they had reached Libya. Delphi was indignant and answered : " If you, who have never visited the cattle-breeding Libya, know it better than I who have, I greatly admire your cleverness." He was in a great huff about it, and forced the colony to return. This time they found the right place.

During its prosperity Cyrene traded considerably with Greece and Egypt, and to a less extent with Carthage. Among the great men who came from Cyrene were Aristippus and other philosophers, the poet Callimachus, the astronomer Eratosthenes, and the Christian rhetorician and bishop Synesius. The cities Teuchira, Hesperis (Bengasi), Cyrene, Appolonia, and Barca constituted the original Libyan Pentapolis. So early as the time of Cyrus, Barca became a separate state, and made itself a nuisance to its neighbour Cyrene ; but within a century it sank and became subject to Egypt. Moreover, the ruins attest that the Assyrians as well as the Egyptians had been here, the temples, sculptures, and bas-reliefs showing unmistakable signs of invasion from the East. At Ghirza, for example, there are some beautiful bas-reliefs depicting domestic life of the fourth and fifth centuries before the Christian era.

Women appear nursing their babies or cooking the dinner, bakers putting bread into the ovens, and vintners gathering grapes ; the latter being proof positive that, unlike their Mussulman successors, the inhabitants of Cyrenaica at that time were not teetotalers.

Thus, in this desolate region, where hardly a blade of grass is now visible, with its enormous accumulation of stones, the haunts of wild cats, there must have been sufficient wine and cereals to supply the demands of inhabitants. The fertility of Ghirza must have been largely responsible for Cyrenaica earning the name of "Rome's granary." According to Horace, in vaunting a man's riches, it was customary to speak of him as having "granaries in Libya." Pindar, in one of his Odes, speaks of Cyrenaica as a land "rich in flocks, yea richest of all lands in the fruits of the field"; and Herodotus wrote of this Eden, that for eight months on end the inhabitants did nothing but harvest. The Romans appear to have taken possession nearly a century before Christ, and as they were not only soldiers, but husbandmen too, they rapidly improved the fertility of the land, constructed enormous aqueducts, and dug wells, the remains of which testify to this day to the fitness of the Romans as colonists. The Vandals, under

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Genseric, swept along the coast in the year 439, and laid waste everything ; and following them came the Berbers, who in their turn were driven out by the Arabs in 647.

Then follow periods of inexplicable silence in the history of the country, broken occasionally by fantastic tales of the misdeeds of the Tripoli pirates committed upon European ships. The pirates were possessed of light, swift-sailing craft and fast rowing-boats to which the more unwieldy merchant ships of the Mediterranean fell an easy prey. Once aboard, the pirates cut and thrust until all the crew was killed, and the young women were taken captive. The mediæval chronicles, and especially those of Sicily with its adjacent coast, tell of these rapes of European women by the Tripoli pirates. There were many expeditions formed to castigate the Arabs, but they had very little preventive effect.

The Barbary pirates waged unceasing war, and they were a terror to all maritime Christianity. The Mussulman dominion was only twice briefly interrupted, the King of Sicily taking and holding possession of Tripoli from 1146 to 1158 ; while the Spaniards, under Ferdinand the Catholic, occupied the place in 1510. It was the Spaniards who built the huge castle at Tripoli in which the

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Governor-General Caneva and his staff at present have their headquarters. In 1523 Tripoli was handed over to the Knights of St. John who had lately been expelled by the Turks from their stronghold in the Island of Rhodes.

The Turkish dominion in Tripoli commenced in 1551, but it was merely nominal, the Arabs adhering to their own mode of living, and refusing to adopt the usages of the Turks. But it should not be forgotten that although a Turkish Admiral took possession, it was the Sicilian renegade, Scipione Cicala, who made the Turkish invasion possible, because he knew how to deal with the Mussulman corsairs. However, the various Beys who ruled appear to have disregarded any claims that Constantinople might have put forward: they paid no tribute, and went their wicked ways quite independently. Far from ceasing, the depredations of the pirates increased, and so dangerous did they render the Mediterranean that one or other of the European countries was always threatening war. In 1655 and in 1675 the British sent ships to chase the pirates. In 1685 the French bombarded Tripoli until the Bey gave guarantees to punish the marauders. The merchants of Venice, in 1764, concluded a treaty with the Governors of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis,



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and Tripoli, for the immunity of their ships from piracy ; but the Bey of Tripoli, like so many of his latter-day successors, did not keep his word. So one fine morning he discovered that Tripoli was threatened by a Venetian naval squadron, which gave him a sharp ultimatum. The Bey tried "conversations," but the temper of the Venetians brooked no delay ; and the Bey had to return the goods and ships confiscated, and pay a big indemnity for those he could not return. Among the ships he delivered up in his haste, the Bey included one which had been stolen from the Greeks.

To this day there has never been any love lost between the Turks and the Arabs, and in 1714 the Arabs effected a *coup* which freed them of the Turkish dominion for over a century. The Arab chief, Ahmad Karamanli, who commanded the cavalry regiment in Tripoli, found means of withdrawing the Ottoman garrison from the city. He then invited the officers and authorities, to the number of three hundred, to a feast. They came all unsuspecting, and Karamanli and his men just quietly despatched them. Constituting himself Bey, Karamanli sent magnificent presents to Constantinople to mollify the Sultan, who, nothing loath, accepted them, and pardoned

the misdeeds of the new Governor. The Karamanli family ruled until 1835, when the Turks, encouraged by the fact that there was internicine strife among the Arabs, came on the scene again with a small fleet. The ruling Karamanli, Ali Pasha, forgetting the history of his family, accepted an invitation to lunch aboard a Turkish man-of-war, and he and his suite were never seen again. They were quietly disposed of by the Turks, who sacked Tripoli, took possession of it again, and have kept possession, despite sundry revolutions, until the recent Italian bombardment.

The city of Tripoli, or, as it was called by the mediæval Arabs, "the white city," viewed by the visitor from the deck of the incoming steamer, seems a veritable gem glistening in the sunlight, its line of dazzling white roofs being broken here and there by graceful minarets, which, because of the form of religion and civilisation for which they stand, fire the imagination of the beholder. Perhaps this first charm to the new-comer is unconsciously coloured by a feeling of gratefulness that a particularly trying sea-trip is ended; but in any case the roseate hue gives place to something very ordinary on a closer acquaintance with the town. However, the subsequent feeling of repulsion against the labyrinth

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of narrow, squalid, formless alleys, dignified by the name of streets, in its turn quickly gives way to curiosity. The traveller's eye is arrested by a thousand and one things of interest, as he threads his way in pursuit of the Arab porter—bearing a striking resemblance to John the Baptist—who, having slung the traveller's portmanteau on his back, with a rope passed round his forehead, leads the way to the Hotel Minerva. Loaded donkeys, mules, and camels, being whacked and urged and cursed by men black, brown, and white, intermingle with the jostling crowd composed of Arabs, stately and richly appressed, owners of many camels and dates ; or of brother tribesmen, meagre and fly-blown, with hardly enough dirt-eaten barracani to cover their nakedness ; fez-topped Israelites, whose white habiliments are encompassed by European top-coats ; big-boned black Bedouins ; stolid Turks in wide pantaloons ; swarthy Fezzans and negroes ; European-clothed Maltese and Italians ; a variety of veiled forms ; and a host of youngsters of all colours and sizes, the liveliest little imps imaginable, who get in everybody's way, and for a marvel never seem to get hurt. The picturesque barracan—also evidence of early Roman occupation, for it is the old Roman toga—is worn



THE PRINCIPAL STREET IN TRIPOLI.



universally. In no other North African town, travellers assert, can there be seen such an interesting conglomeration of human beings, who, owing to the comparative isolation of Tripoli from the methods and manners of European civilisation, go about the place and live their lives as their forbears have done for many centuries. The population is 40,000, which the environs in normal times bring up to 60,000. Of these, 6,000 are Israelites and 4,000 Christians, most of whom are Maltese and Italian.

Prior to the advent of the Italian army, whose medical department set to work to thoroughly cleanse and disinfect the place, and employed a whole host of unemployed Arabs and negroes to clean out all the dirty nooks and corners, the streets were evil-smelling, abominably dirty, and reeking with disease; in fact, the very walls emitted pungent odours, which discouraged the curious from making too close an investigation of the native quarters. Naturally, despite the beautiful climate and the health-giving ozone, infectious disease was rampant. Typhus carried off many victims, and on entering the town the Italians were faced with the awful problem of a cholera epidemic. In passing, the writer is compelled to pay tribute to the magnificent work done



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by the Italian medical and sanitary corps. This has been one of the chief triumphs of the campaign. Notwithstanding the appalling overcrowding of poor and miserably dirty natives, necessitated by the clearing of the oasis, the Italian doctors tackled their task with enthusiasm, and in less than two months had ended the typhus and practically stamped out the cholera. The sick and ill-nourished children were fertile ground for infectious disease, but the Italians took these black and brown bairns, bathed and fed them, and tended them as lovingly as if they had been their own *bambini*. Sick and emaciated Arabs, who perhaps had never had a bath in their lives, were scrubbed as clean as a new pin. At first their dismayed faces suggested that they feared some horrible death was being prepared for them, but when after their ablutions they were presented with brand new baccarani, their mixture of joy and incredulity was laughable to behold. Contrary to repeated Turkish denials, it has been discovered that a little malaria exists in Tripoli, and Italian specialists have set to work immediately on that particular subject. We must apologise for this digression, but when most of the glory goes to the fighters with rifle and cannon, it should not be forgotten that to the medical and sanitary administra-

tion is due in great part not only the wonderful health of the troops, but the fact that Tripoli has been made into something like a new city.

There are three fairly respectable streets, and the nuclei of several more, not to mention the possibilities of a fine esplanade on the sea-front ; but the housing, especially of the indigenous people, is of a very inferior character. Indeed, the dwellings consist for the most part of one-storied hovels, built of a compound of mud, stone, and sand, often with no other roof but palm-leaf matting. These houses frequently have apartments below ground, where the temperature is more equable, and not subject to the violent changes between night and day. One room is given over to the women, who, being inferior creatures, have to keep out of the men's apartments. These erections make no attempt to conform to a street line. Of course, these are the abodes of the poor. There are houses of a more ambitious character, both among the Arabs and the Israelites. They are mostly built with an inner court open to the sky, around which court runs a portico with apartments. As to the internal economy of these rooms little is known, as no Mussulman allows a Christian to see his private apartment. No window looks out on

to the street, because it is not considered "proper" for the women-folk to see or to be seen. As in Egypt, however, there are some houses with very close lattice-work windows, which allow the inhabitants to see into the street and yet not to be seen. Bearing in mind the strict injunctions given to the Italian soldiers not to offend Arabs by staring at their women, it was often amusing to watch the features of some Italian "Tommy" set rigidly, with eyes averted, as a veiled figure passed his line of vision. Poets have expatiated upon the Italian's proverbial susceptibilities where the fair sex is concerned. But stern military duty is evidently the stronger. Of course, nothing of the Arab lady can be seen, except perhaps one eye, which none the less appears to have a wide and effective range.

The mosques and minarets have no particularly attractive features. The castle is of a huge "four-square" character, and looks imposing from the sea; there are several factory-like erections for dealing with esparto grass, pressing olives, and milling corn; but otherwise there are no structures of an impressive type. The ruin of a Roman arch of Marcus Aurelius is lost in a labyrinth of lanes and is used as a cabaret and "cheap-jack" store. The Arabs

say that for many generations there has been a legend among them that this arch would be restored at the end of the Ottoman dominion : and they are very much impressed now that the Italian Government has ordered a complete clearance of the rubbishy buildings which have been piled inside and outside of it. A piazza is to be formed round it, and the Government has given a commendable order that no archæological remains are to be taken out of the country.

Some of the villas of Maltese and European residents have modest pretensions, and there are springing up several small hotels of good appearance. The Banco di Roma perhaps has the finest premises, which, of course, is not saying much. The shops are of the usual small "two-by-four" type common to the East, where the merchant sits among his merchandise. It is absorbingly interesting to saunter along and watch the various craftsmen at work, tailors, bakers, cobblers, blacksmiths, saddlers, jewellers, iron-workers, etc., whose handicraft, though rough, is none the less often of a really artistic character. The big hand-looms of the weavers are curious but efficient constructions. But not the least interesting to the visitor is the market

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outside the walls, where, amid a babel of tongues and dialects, one may bid for anything from a camel to a button. Just outside the wall also is the encampment of the poor Bedouins, Arabs, and Fezzans—a heap of huts composed of sticks, palm-leaves, and all the dirty rags and refuse of the city. It is a menace to the health of the whole population, despite the sanitary precautions enforced upon the inhabitants by the Italians, and it is a veritable hot-bed of vice. Among this population a terrible ophthalmic disease, bred of dirt and accentuated by the fine wind-borne sand and by the plague of flies, is rife and causes blindness.

The Turkish authorities presumably thought it not worth while to provide anything in the way of hospital accommodation. What they did provide was practically no good; but the Italians and French some time ago established hospitals which, though inadequate, were of great service. As to schools, those for which the late Government was responsible were hardly worthy of the name. There was a small school for the sons of the richer Arabs, which gave them an elementary preparation for the military profession, after which they went to Constantinople. The Italians long ago, despite Turkish obstruction,

established elementary schools for boys and girls, and a kindergarten, all directly supported by the Italian Government, who also subsidised schools kept by Franciscan brothers and sisters. The Jews also have a school of their own, and in preference to Turkish, many of their children, as well as Arab children, have learned to speak Italian. The teaching of Arabic has now been undertaken in the Italian schools, which decision has given great satisfaction to the Arabs, for up to now the education of their children has consisted mainly in the learning of verses from the Koran. For some time before the Italian occupation there were three post offices—Italian, French, and Turkish—and the fact that the Italian office was getting all the business, even from the natives, was also scored up by the Turks against the Italians.

There was a municipal administration of sorts, the council consisting of persons either nominated or approved by the Governor. It had charge of the public health, and of the making of new streets, aqueducts, bridges, etc., but, as is not unknown in municipalities of countries making more pretension to civilisation, jobbery was rampant, and the councillors were accused of making improvements only to their own property



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and its vicinity, and of managing not to sanction any new construction for which they themselves were not the contractors. And, as in less benighted lands, the potency of a bribe was thoroughly well understood in the public affairs of Tripoli.

Under such corrupt conditions it was inevitable that the various Consulates should gradually become a power in the land. With no hope of justice or redress from the rotten governmental administration, the indigenous inhabitants turned for advice and help to the institutions representative of foreign Powers:—this appears to be the usual thing in Turkish countries. The British Consulate, for instance, has its staircase and ante-rooms crowded almost daily by people with grievances or needing advice. There is a venerable and picturesque Mohammedan there, who, to the majority of these people, plays the part of justice of the peace. He has been in the Consulate for forty years, and not unnaturally is proud of the fact. In comes an excited Arab merchant, stout and podgy, puffing from his climb up the stairs, and looking like a veritable Blue Beard. He has been brought there at the instance of a young Maltese who has done some work for him. And the difference between them



MARKET SCENE AT TRIPOLI.



is a matter of twenty-five francs. The patriarchal representative of His Majesty King George listens sympathetically, talks to the litigants like a father—and splits the difference for them. Next comes a Maltese fireman, holding by the hand his nine-year-old son. He admits that he has deserted from an Italian ship, because another Maltese has threatened to knife him while he is asleep. He appears to have a touching faith in the omnipotence of Great Britain, because every other sentence he utters is “I’m a British subject”; and he claims protection. This means international complications, however, and Mr. Dickson, the Vice-Consul, gives a patient hearing, but ends in advising the man to go back to his ship. So it goes on all day; and thus it comes about that the Consulates have a great influence in the life and affairs of the community. It has often occurred that the British, French, and Italian Consulates have been appealed to in matters which were absolutely outside their jurisdiction, but which the applicants never seemed to dream of submitting for settlement to the Turkish judiciaries.

One of the greatest grievances against the Turkish Administration was its refusal to spend money on the harbour in providing even a

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modicum of safety for shipping. The roughness of the sea on the North African coast is something which the best of mariners dread, and the heavier Tripolitan shipping has to ride at anchor nearly a mile out, exposed to all the furies of sea gales and Siroccos. There are practically no dock facilities, and the loading and unloading of cargoes has to be done into scows and small boats, of which there are a large number manned by a set of rough-and-ready rascals common to all Eastern ports. When the great gales come, therefore, practically all communication with the shore is impossible, and, as the writer has reason to remember from the gale which was responsible for wrecking the hangars of the military dirigibles, attempts to embark are attended with great risks. After every gale the shore is strewn with wrecks of small craft, and salvage work is a regular means of livelihood for a large number of longshoremen. One of the most pathetic incidents of the late December gales was the wreck of a schooner with a precious cargo of Chianti and champagne. It lay tossing and being smashed to pieces almost within arm's length of a crowd on the shore. One of the spectators, the writer remembers, was a famous war-correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, and as

he stood with his burly form braced against the breeze, the mournful contemplation depicted on his countenance was something not to be forgotten.

Of the other Tripolitan towns the most important is Ghadames, situated 500 kilometres from Tripoli on the Tunisian frontier. It has a population of about 12,000, and has been a sort of clearing-house for the caravans which take from Tripoli foreign goods, and bring from the interior ivory, ostrich feathers, beeswax, hides, and gold-dust. Because of its connection with the trade of the Hinterland, Ghadames was supposed to be very much coveted by the French, who very enterprisingly pushed their boundary right to its very gates, and past both sides of it. The town is surrounded by a high wall, which serves as a protection from the sands of the desert. It is founded on the bed of an old river, and hot springs give fertility to its gardens. Its inhabitants present, perhaps, the most perfect Berber type. The streets are very narrow, and quite dark, because of the many arches and awnings of matting. The appearance is that of a lot of subterranean corridors broken by small oases of sunlight, which are made by the smaller shops. The people, in order not to knock up against



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each other in the dark, beat the ground with their feet in walking, and the women keep up a low murmur. Richer people provide themselves with lanterns. It is a very ancient city, and there are some Greek and Roman antiquities, Ghadames being the old Roman Cydamus.

Ghat, another important town, lies about 915 kilometres from Tripoli, at one of the main gates to the Sahara, and is situate on a watershed. Like Ghadames, it is a trading centre, and the Senussi have great influence there. It is surrounded by a low, ill-built wall, and from a central piazza radiate the streets. Instead of the usual white the houses are a dirty earth-colour. The population is Berber. Very little is known about Ghat, the history of the exploration of the territory being "written in rivers of blood."

Murzuk, the capital of the Fezzan, the southernmost Tripolitan territory, has a population of about 6,000, and is surrounded by a wall of clay, which, because of its saline ingredients, glistens in the sun. The bastions and towers, however, are in decay. It has a rather important market, where Arab, Berber, Soudanese, and Kabylese dialects are to be heard in the uplifted voices of those doing business. The Governor of Tripoli deemed it necessary to keep here a strong

garrison, whose duty was supposed to be the checking and punishing of the marauders who attacked the caravans, and rendered the trade routes so dangerous that commerce fell into decay; but the garrison never took its duties very seriously, and, far from rendering the routes safe, they were not above methods of "graft" to make up for Government neglect in the matter of salaries and provisions. Life in Murzuk is said to be very agreeable for Europeans, who, if they are not archæologists or explorers, find some tolerable sport in excursions in the neighbourhood.

Inland from Tripoli, about 90 kilometres, lies Gharian, a small town in the Gebel Mountains, and this is what Leo Africanus has to say about it: "Of Mount Gharian. This high and cold mountaine, containing in length fortie and in bredth fifteene miles, and being separated from other mountaines by a sandie desert, is distant from Tripolis almost fiftie miles. It yeeldeth great plentie of barly and of dates, which vnlesse they be spent while they are new, will soon prooue rotten. Heere are likewise abundance of oliues: wherefore from this mountaine into Alexandria and other cities there is much oil conueighed. There is not better saffron to be

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found in any part of the world besides, which in regard of the goodnesse is solde very deere. For yeerely tribute there is gathered out of this mountaine threescore thousand ducates, and as much saffron as fiftene mules can carrie. They . . . have certain base villages vpon this mountaine."

Eastward along the coast are Tagiura, with about 4,000 inhabitants; Homs, near the ruins of the ancient Leptis, a seaport which has acquired importance as an outlet for the trade in esparto grass, one of the presses there being owned by a Liverpool firm; and Misurata, another port, from which some of the slave trade was done. Misurata is a place relatively of much importance, because it is the last of Tripolitania which is permanently inhabited to the east of the capital. Along the coast to Bengasi there are only to be found the huts of nomadic tribes. The houses in Misurata are fairly well built in tolerably straight streets, with a market-place in the centre of the town. As the inhabitants are much given to digging underground cellars, and the surface is of a shallow layer of rocky substance, it not infrequently happens that houses subside into the cellars.

At the other side of the Gulf of Sidra lies



THE CASTLE AT BENGASI.



ITALIAN ARTILLERY.



Bengasi, or Barca, the capital of Cyrenaica, with a fluctuating population of about 20,000. Because of its splendid situation, the town was named after Berenice of the beautiful hair. In fact, it was originally the site of the Garden of Hesperides, and its river Lethe is undoubtedly the river Lethe of mythology, whose waters rejuvenated and drew a veil over the past, for to this day the Arabs pretend that the river is holy and must not be dirtied by drinking from it. They also say that its waters have the power to make one forget the past, and they would therefore be dangerous to drink. As at Tripoli, banks of rocks run out into the sea, and the coast is particularly dangerous in winter, but there are two sea-walls being constructed now which will give more safety to shipping. The town is completely Oriental in character, and is comparatively clean and well-built. There are several fine bazaars, and the sea-front has all the possibilities of a beautiful promenade. Besides the mosques, there are Catholic and Greek and Jewish churches. Behind the town are two veritable mountains of salt, and there are natural salt-pans along the coast. There is a vast field for archæological explorers in the neighbourhood—ruins of temples, the only inhabitants of which are now wolves and wild



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cats. The galleries of the British Museum have been enriched with beautiful fragments from this district. In a temple of Apollo a spring still exists. There are a Roman aqueduct, well preserved, and the ruins of an Egyptian temple. At Merg there are some wonderful bas-reliefs. But it is at Massa that one of the most interesting discoveries was made. Mr. H. Weld-Blundell found there a particularly remarkable megalithic group, which has an astonishing resemblance to Stonehenge; and Mr. Cowper remarks that this lends colour to the tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth, that the stones of Stonehenge were brought by the arts of giants of old from Africa to Kildare, and afterwards by Merlin to Salisbury Plain.

If Bengasi is as charming as Berenice, to what glorious beauty must we liken Derna, the "Pearl of Cyrenaica," for she has the most delightful situation it is possible to imagine, and her climate is far superior to that of the Riviera? The town is situated on the two banks of a wadai, in which, a few kilometres above, is a cascade of about 90 feet fall. Through the streets run streamlets of water, which give the town a delightfully fresh appearance, quite unusual to North Africa. Indeed, Derna is likely seriously to rival Nice and

other Mediterranean beauty-spots as an attraction to visitors, and, with all its natural advantages, it is certain to be a successful rival. It has a population at present of about 10,000, mostly Berbers, and it has not been developed along commercial lines, chiefly through lack of a good port, and because ships have to anchor a mile out. A pier could easily be constructed, however, to accommodate passenger-boats.

Tobruk, reputed to have been coveted both by Britain and Germany, is a small Arab village, but it is the fact of its possessing a wonderful natural harbour that has caused these countries to cast envious eyes in its direction. When we consider that it can hold a fleet which, if hostile, could menace the approach to the Suez, we can readily realise England's anxiety concerning who should be its ultimate possessors. The inlet extends two miles north-west by west, and is three-quarters of a mile broad, and from five to eight fathoms deep, except for half a mile at the head of the bay, where the water is shallow. It affords excellent shelter from all winds except those from east and south-east, which are more prevalent in summer than in winter. The Italian Navy has already effectually proved its value as a naval base, and there is a talk of making it a second

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Toulon. It is the expressed opinion of more than one authority that whoever holds Tobruk holds the supremacy of the Eastern Mediterranean, and, while opinions vary, there is a general belief that for a comparatively little outlay Tobruk will soon be in a position to equal Biserta or Malta. It is interesting to know that Nelson's fleet once took refuge in this natural harbour. Beyond Tobruk there lies a great expanse of alternating fertile and arid territory which stretches right away to the undefined Egyptian boundary, and is unoccupied except for a few Bedouin villages, and with no landmarks save the tumbled ruins of ancient civilisations.

## CHAPTER V

### ITS COMMERCIAL VALUE

HAVING sustained a severe fall from his high moral attitude in condemning the Tripoli Expedition, the superior person in politics is now asking the world to laugh with him over the absurdity of Italy pouring out blood and treasure for a colony that will be no good to her. It is true that Libya is not so fruitful and prosperous as of old, and that, so far as we know, there is no fabulous wealth of gold and diamonds to be obtained, which, according to the peculiar logic of some critics, would have given the war a perfectly moral justification. But this fact only serves to strengthen the contention that Italy was urged on by the political necessity, and not by the greed of get-rich-quick capitalists. As to Tripoli being a bad or a good speculation, Italy's reply is that her only choice in the matter was that of Hobson. But indeed there is something of sour grapes in these

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futile efforts to depreciate the commercial value of the new colony: for it is plain that with wise and democratic control, under which the common people shall be given a fair chance, with the conjunction of all the latest scientific methods and machinery of production in industry and in agriculture, and with the unexampled pioneering ability and enthusiasm of the Italian emigrant, there will be built up one of the finest colonies in the world. The probable absence in large quantities of gold and precious stones will be all to its advantage, for the civilisation attendant upon the intense exploitation of such wealth is not of the highest, and most surely has its corollary of misery and degradation. The comfortable prosperity of a race of pastoral workers and industrial craftsmen will provide a more reliable element of support, both material and spiritual, to the homeland in the strenuous future that lies before it.

Because of the dangers attendant upon exploration and survey, and the violent opposition offered by the Turks during the best part of the last century to attempts at investigation, we are in the position of knowing very little about the physical features and possible resources of Libya, beyond the limits of the littoral. So

many travellers who have sought to gather information have never returned from the Hinterland, and what manner of fate befell them has never been known. There are no high mountains, although there are several mountainous regions. The highest point in the Gebels is not much more than 3,000 feet high, and there is scarcely anything higher in the Black Mountains. The rest is undulating country, although many of the undulations are considerable. A belt of oasis, varying from three to six miles in breadth, runs practically along the whole length of the coast, and there are frequent oases breaking the sandy waste of the interior.

There are no true rivers, because there are no mountains high enough to keep them running, but there are many water-courses which become roaring torrents in the rainy season. Their positions are marked by zones of fertility, refreshingly beautiful to see, and where the Arab husbandman hastens to sow his seed after the rains. It is a common thing for caravans to make pauses long enough to grow and harvest a crop, which, of course, does not take to grow anything like the time required in more northern climes. But the irregularity and inconsistency of the rains render the Arab's life a very precarious



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one, and with his hand-to-mouth methods famine has been all too frequent. An old folk-tale current among them seems to be sufficient explanation to the Arabs for the fact that for days together they sometimes see nothing but dry, yellow sand. According to this tale it appears that once upon a time, between the Syrtic Sea and the far Gebels, there lay a fertile and beautiful country. The people never laboured; they could pluck fruit in abundance, and, like the Arcadians, they lived as shepherds in an earthly paradise. But eventually their simple life gave way to luxury and dissipation. Then Allah sought to try them. So one day there appeared in this country the most beautiful of the Houris. She was drawn through the waves by golden dolphins, who put her on shore at Menscia, where she took up her abode in a shady palm-grove. The news of this marvellous apparition soon spread through the country-side, and reached the ears of the son of the Sultan Ghadea. He was so inflamed by the passion to make this lovely girl his own, that he travelled to the palm-grove. But the Houri sought shelter beside her faithful dolphins on the sea waves. Then the son of the Sultan entreated her to come back to land, solemnly promising

that he would honour her and would respect the rights of hospitality, and that she should be free to leave whenever she wished. The divine maiden, believing in his promises, consented to return to the land, but scarcely had she done so when the Prince tried to take her captive? Filled with despair, she dashed back to the sea, followed by a host of pursuers. They reached her at Menscia, the place where she had first appeared, but before they could touch her, she completely vanished—and at the same moment all the springs and wells went dry. Thus had Allah punished the people's disobedience and dissoluteness.

The climate is somewhat hotter than that of Algiers and Tunis, which are protected a little by the Atlas Mountains from the hot currents from the interior ; but for more than two hundred days in the year the average temperature is moderate ; and in Tripoli, where readings have been taken, it is only from three to four degrees higher than the temperature of Palermo. This comparative mildness of climate is really remarkable, considering the nearness to the tropics, and gives ground for the hope that certain towns will become climatic stations of the first order, out-rivalling the new places which have been opened

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up in the French colonies. The nights are fairly cold ; but there is so much humidity that the heavy dew is sufficient in many places to supply moisture to the vegetation. The Sirocco comes several times a year to liven things up ; and, while it is a disagreeable visitor, it is claimed by the Arabs that it has a tonicky effect upon the date-palms, hastening the ripening and somehow adding to their sweetness. What may be termed the rainy season is not a very formidable visitation, being heaviest in December. But even then it is rare for rain to fall for a whole day ; there are intermittent spells of brilliant sunshine and invigorating breezes. A hailstorm which occurred in March 1906 is remembered as a most remarkable phenomenon.

The standard of wealth for the Arab is the palm-tree, and the dates which it gives him are often his whole sustenance. Considering its refreshing beauty and grace, and its economic usefulness, it is small wonder that the Arab poet sings the praise of the palm. Its peculiar sighing, comparable to that of a lovesick swain, is a very hackneyed theme among the minor versifiers. The palm flourishes practically without attention, and that perhaps is one of its chief recommendations ; for the Arab is notoriously a man of

leisure. An Arab proverb states that it is only necessary that the palm shall stand with its feet in the water and its head in the sun. Certainly its head can stand any amount of sun ; and its fine, long roots go after the water which is generally to be found within a few feet of the surface. The date is a staple article of diet for the indigenous people ; it is not only eaten as a fruit, but from the date-stones is compounded a meal which, when baked, gives a bread of sorts. The best dates are those from the Fezzan. An Arab's wealth is computed by the number of palms he possesses, and the Turks were accustomed to levy their taxation on that basis. The Turkish extortions in this respect, as we have said, led to the wholesale slaughtering of palm-trees, and the denuding of large tracts of oasis. One palm in good condition renders from 160 to 200 lb. of dates, which would average a cash revenue of from 14 to 15 francs. One hectare of land can support a hundred palms, which means an income from 1,400 to 1,500 francs. The whole plant is precious. The wood is useful in house or boat building ; from the fibre cording is made ; the leaves are worked up into roofing, shoes, sandals, hats, brooms, matting, and many other articles ; and from the live tree

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may be drawn off a kind of inferior wine which, however, seems to be very acceptable to the natives, judging by the great pains they take to secure it.

All the fruits for which Southern Italy is famous grow splendidly in Tripolitania—oranges, lemons, almonds, and olives in abundance—although only rough-and-ready methods of cultivation have been used. There is a considerable manufacture of olive-oil. Italian business men have imported the most approved machinery, and a complete plant for pressing oil has been established on the outskirts of Tripoli. This plant has only been in operation for about a year; but the firm has realised a much larger amount of oil per bushel than the Arabs realise by their antiquated process. The olive-trees grow to an enormous size, and there are encouraging prospects of a big olive-oil industry being developed.

Tobacco grows easily; even the natives are able to grow fairly good qualities, and with scientific methods the plant would render in far greater abundance, and of higher quality. The vine also, although cultivated carelessly, is very fruitful, but as the Mohammedan has little use for wine, viticulture has not been developed into an

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industry. Bananas at Derna give good returns to the comparatively few people who have taken the trouble to grow them. Cotton is cultivated in a very primitive way, but is astonishingly successful, thanks to the encouraging climate. Mulberry-trees are grown for the shade they give to dwellings, and a few families even carry on a small silk-worm industry. In this respect, the Italian occupation is likely to have a big effect, for the Italian scientific cultivation of silk-worms has given her pre-eminence over Lyons for silk. There is little flora outside the gardens, but in these is to be seen a wonderful variety of most beautiful flowers. One product of the new colony, which has hardly been touched, is the fish, which abound all along the coast: and it is probable that Sicilian fishermen will be encouraged to go over and tap that source of wealth.

The present uncultivated state of the land, contrasted with the prosperity of the past, has given rise to the theory that the climate has changed since the days when the Greeks and Romans made the country to blossom like a garden. But the theory rests on no reliable foundation, and expert opinion says that there is not the slightest doubt about the potential fertility of the soil. The present decadence of agriculture



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in Libya is due solely to man's neglect. The lack of water is not so much attributable to an insufficient rainfall as to the native's ignorance as to how to make the best of it; or, which is still nearer the truth, his ingrained indolence and "sufficient-unto-the-day" philosophy. This has led to his allowing the aqueducts and reservoirs, constructed by the Romans, to sink into decay. But in addition to the factors of the lack of water and the natural idleness of the population, the extortionate taxation inflicted upon the husbandmen, both by Arab and Turkish taskmasters, have discouraged cultivation and been an additional blight upon the land.

The Turks, at any rate, had no doubts as to the possible fruitfulness of the land; although their policy was one of depreciation, lest the colony should become too attractive in the eyes of the Powers who had already gobbled up so much Mussulman territory. Dr. E. J. Dillon, writing from Constantinople, said he had discussed the matter with "influential members of the Government and the Opposition, with ex-Grand Viziers, Senators, and military men," and what they told him was that "the resources of the country are incomparably greater than is commonly assumed. The seven harbours, Tripoli, Homs, Misurata,

Bengasi, Derna, Bomba, and Tobruk, might be transformed into thriving places, as they were in olden times when Carthage, Greece, or Rome ruled the land. The area which is fit for colonisation and capable of producing date-palms, olives, corn, cotton, indigo, vegetables, fruit, flowers, grapes, is, according to the most competent authorities, more extensive than the whole German Empire." The German explorer, Gerhard Rohlfs, wrote in 1894 that the so-called desert which seems to suffocate in mortal embrace Tripoli itself, is really good ground, capable of rendering immediately substantial returns, if it is cultivated with care. "I have proved this in numerous experiments which I have made myself, and which show that this soil is of incontestable value."

In connection with Cyrenaica it is interesting to read the report of the Commission sent out by the Jewish Territorial Organisation to spy out the land as a possible colony for the refoundation of Zion. The report was not favourable for the purposes of the Zionist occupation, but Dr. Gregory admits there is much good land between Derna and the Egyptian frontier, the cultivable region being especially along the coast. Although very fertile, it is almost uninhabited,

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but one is occasionally surprised by droves of camels and donkeys laden with barley, thus denoting that there exist some occupation and cultivation. The main district of Cyrenaica is between Derna and Bengasi, and consists of a high plateau. The northern zone of this plateau, and the coast-plain at its foot, Dr. Gregory says, are the best for colonisation, for this zone receives the heavy winter rains: "Trees, plants, shrubs, are found flourishing in almost all situations." Yet, for their purposes, the Jewish Commissioners found the country disappointing, in spite of its beauty, its healthiness, its pleasant climate, and its position.

The report of the Jewish Commissioners, however, is subjected to criticism by Dr. O. Manetti, editor of *Agricoltura Coloniale*, the journal of the Italian Institute of Colonial Agriculture. He points out that the Jewish Mission was admittedly conducted "under the auspices of the Governor-General of Tripoli"; and, indeed, was greatly favoured by him. To Dr. Gregory's remark that "We could understand why the Turkish authorities would so warmly welcome help in their endeavours to develop its resources," Dr. Manetti replies that the Italians can perfectly well understand that it

was only favoured by the Turkish Government because they saw in it an obstacle to Italian economic expansion. He ridicules the idea that the J.T.O. could have made any thorough examination of so vast an area, when they started from Derna on July 27, 1908, and, going in a straight line, reached Bengasi on August 14. "The Mission only stayed three to four days in the centre of Cyrenaica. The expedition was carried out in the most dry part of the year, and it is impossible in only eighteen days of observation to explore from the geological, meteorological, and agrarian point of view a territory of twelve thousand square miles." As a matter of fact, Libya has never been scientifically studied. There have been no great geological changes in historic times, and it has not been proved that there is less water than in the time of the "Libya Opima of our fathers." The French in Tunis have shown what can be done in the way of intensive cultivation with water obtained almost entirely from the sub-soil. Although the Americans plume themselves on the discovery of "dry farming," Dr. Manetti maintains that that system has been employed in Italy for centuries—an Italian agriculturist wrote a pamphlet on the subject in 1567—and it was certainly practised in

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ancient Egypt. Italian labour has successfully planted eleven million olive-trees in Tunis, and it can surely do the same in Libya. Most successful experiments in cotton-growing have been made during the past five years in Eritrea, and it is hoped that this precious textile plant will be extensively grown in the new colony.

“The soils in Cyrenaica belong to the class most prized by agriculturists,” remarks Dr. Manetti. An Arab effendi who lived in Bengasi for forty years testifies that Cyrenaica produces, “even with the old-fashioned methods of the Bedouin, who scratches the soil and scatters the seed as he would the ashes from his pipe,” twenty-five million kilos of cereals, and feeds one hundred thousand head of cattle. The two driving ambitions of the Bedouin are to possess much cattle and beautiful weapons; he cares nothing for the cultivation of the soil beyond what is necessary for feeding himself and his cattle. In many places water is to be found a few feet below the surface of the soil, good enough for irrigation, if not for drinking purposes. The Italian soldiers themselves have soon settled the question of the fertility of the soil, for where they have been in the trenches for a couple of months they have made flourishing little gardens, work-

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ing on which has helped to break the monotony of watching for the enemy. The admirable suggestion has been made that the first Italians privileged to settle in the new colony and take up land should be the soldiers who have fought for it; and this would only be repeating history, for the Roman legions of old were fighters and farmers at the same time, and thus satisfactorily settled the question of supplies. It is abundantly clear that with his peculiar capacity as a pioneer, his love for the soil, his co-operative methods which enable him to employ the most up-to-date machinery, the Italian soldier turned civilian will "make good" where the indigenious, indolent Arab and Bedouin have barely scraped a living. Of Libya's total area of, roughly, 375,119 square miles, over 150,000 square miles are tillable, but are lying fallow, while the total area under any form of cultivation is less than 23,000 square miles.

But although agriculture finds itself in a miserable state, independent of that, Libya has a certain source of wealth represented by esparto, a grass nearly allied to the well-known feather-grass. It requires neither water nor care, and grows in abundance on the uncultivated hills which form the zone. From very ancient times it has



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been used on both sides of the Mediterranean for the making of carpets, sandals, ropes, baskets, nets, and sacks, and as a substitute for horsehair. But its chief application is now as a component in paper-making, for which it is mostly exported to Britain. It also grows in Tunis and Algiers. The Arabs, after they have gathered the grass, make it up in bundles and transport it on camels to Tripoli or Homs. On being sold in the market there, it is pressed into bales of two quintals each, which are then loaded into special steamers for export. From Tripolitania there are exported on an average 300,000 quintals a year, which gives an annual proceed of three million francs. The Ottoman Government, besides keeping back one per cent. of the proceeds, enforced an octroi duty on the grass coming into the cities. The practice of the Arabs is to pull and not cut the plant, and this reckless exploitation results in injury alike to the supply and the soil itself. In Algeria the Government has had to take steps to stop this, but the Turkish Government has allowed this destruction of a certain source of wealth to go on. An English firm is one of the chief exporters of esparto.

Sponge-fishing is a considerable source of revenue to Libya. The fisheries were begun on

a systematic scale about 1890, and have become one of the most important industries. The best sponges come from the waters of Bengasi and Bomba. The methods of fishing employed are machine boats, trawlers, harpoon-boats, and naked divers with line and stone. The machine boats, whose men are equipped with diving-suits, make the largest takes, but the naked diver brings up the best sponges. Trawling and harpooning tend to damage the sponges. The machine boats are all Greek, but many of the trawlers are Italian, while a large number of the harpooners are natives of the Tunisian coast. There was a great deal of "graft" in the trade, in consideration of which the Turkish authorities allowed working conditions to exist which were responsible for a perfect holocaust of divers' lives—conditions which had long been stopped by other countries.

Another valuable trade is that of ostrich feathers, of the treatment of which the following interesting description is given by Mr. H. S. Cowper: "The ostrich feathers are brought by caravan from the Wadai district to Tripoli, where they are sorted by Jews. They arrive in bundles and in the same dirty condition as they are taken from the birds, and, consequently, the first process

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they are put through is that of cleaning. To do this they are soaked and scrubbed and then beaten out dry on the house roof or stone floor, and are then flattened by hand, so as to make the plumage project horizontally. In the packing of them the Wadai merchants are very clever, and often load each bundle with a certain amount of sand, because they are sold by weight. In other cases, long feathers are cleverly manufactured by splitting and joining shorter ones. In these trade tricks, however, the Tripoli merchants compete with the merchants of Wadai, for, in repacking the clean feathers for Europe, they so arrange the sorted bundles that they appear to be all long feathers, when they are made up inside of feathers of all lengths. The European buyers, however, know this, and the prices regulate themselves. The plumes are, of course, further prepared and curled in Europe for the market. With regard to price, a great deal depends on fashion, black, white, or grey alternating in proportionate value. But in Tripoli fine white plumes can be bought retail at five francs, grey ones at three francs, and the black, which are of smaller size, at two francs each."

The imports and exports of Tripoli for an average year have been as follows, but it must

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be taken into account that the diversion of the caravan trade into routes which have been rendered safe by the French and British, in addition to the Turkish blight on industry generally, has during recent years caused the trade of Tripoli to suffer considerably :

|                   | Lire.      |
|-------------------|------------|
| Imports . . . . . | 11,892,000 |
| Exports . . . . . | 9,485,900  |

The imports are thus divided according to the countries from which they come :

|                                                     | Lire.             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| From England . . . . .                              | 2,275,000         |
| „ Italy <sup>1</sup> . . . . .                      | 2,050,000         |
| „ Austria-Hungary . . . . .                         | 1,960,000         |
| „ Turkish provinces of Europe and<br>Asia . . . . . | 1,630,000         |
| „ France . . . . .                                  | 1,610,000         |
| „ Germany . . . . .                                 | 505,000           |
| „ Tunisia . . . . .                                 | 450,000           |
| „ Egypt . . . . .                                   | 292,000           |
| „ Belgium . . . . .                                 | 290,000           |
| „ Isle of Crete . . . . .                           | 180,000           |
| „ Greece . . . . .                                  | 120,000           |
| „ other countries . . . . .                         | 530,000           |
| Total . . . . .                                     | <u>11,892,000</u> |

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, Italy stands easily first, for goods coming from Malta are reckoned as British exports, while a large portion of them are actually Italian, but are transhipped at Malta.

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The exports are divided as follows, according to the countries to which they are destined :

|                                                  | Lire.            |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| For England . . . . .                            | 3,375,000        |
| „ Turkish provinces of Europe and Asia . . . . . | 1,440,000        |
| „ France . . . . .                               | 1,200,000        |
| „ Malta . . . . .                                | 830,000          |
| „ United States . . . . .                        | 620,000          |
| „ Greece . . . . .                               | 490,000          |
| „ Italy . . . . .                                | 434,000          |
| „ Egypt . . . . .                                | 349,000          |
| „ Tunisia and Algiers . . . . .                  | 320,000          |
| „ Germany . . . . .                              | 160,900          |
| „ Isle of Crete . . . . .                        | 87,000           |
| „ other countries . . . . .                      | 180,000          |
| Total . . . . .                                  | <u>9,485,900</u> |

The exports include cattle, sheep, esparto, sponges, olive-oil, ostrich feathers, dates, skins, wool, sappan wood, eggs, old silver, butter, matting, henna, and other articles, including poultry, game, and vegetables. The shipment of sheep, camels, and donkeys to Egypt, which was fairly considerable, was stopped, and in the last year the Turks put an embargo on the exportation of horses and cattle because it had got into the hands of the Italians, who indeed seemed to be taking entire control of the business of the place. Bengasi remained until

quite recently the outlet for the traffic in slaves, and Misurata also did a like business in human flesh, which was principally shipped to Constantinople and Smyrna.

Italy has been charged with undue precipitancy, but if the conquest of trade was her only motive, then her gunboats arrived off the Tripolitan coast much too late; some of her present moral mentors had "got there first." The convenient position of Tripoli for the enormously rich caravan trade from the interior had made her an exceedingly prosperous city, and, with the development of the Hinterland, she might have become one of the richest trade centres in the world. From Tripoli formerly began the direct road to Timbuctoo and the Upper Niger, and it was followed by most of the explorers who visited Lake Tchad and Northern Nigeria in the earlier part of the last century.

The two main trade routes across the Sahara came out at Tripoli and Bengasi, and it was because of this that Rohlf's maintained that the possession of Tunis was not worth a tenth part that of Tripoli, and that the Power which took Tripoli would get the Soudan into the bargain. But France had her eye upon the trans-Saharan commerce, and she has left no stone unturned



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to get it. By "rectifying" her Tunisian boundaries she has managed to cut across the route to Ghadames, and by the temporary taking off of imposts on the traffic, which suffered grievously in that respect at the hands of the Turks, she has managed to divert a great deal of the traffic. A substantial remnant, however, declined the presents and "little commissions" offered by the French, and remained faithful to Tripoli. Even although there is no port at Gabes, every effort has been made to complete a road there from Ghadames, and to hurry on the making of a port. As there is a scarcity of water on the road along which the French are seeking to entice the trade, engineers are at work making artesian wells. But perhaps the greatest inducements to the caravans which were diverted was the fact that the French rendered the road secure from the predatory bands which prey upon the cross-desert trade, while the Turks not only did nothing to make the time-worn routes safe, but are even charged with having participated in the plunder. They made some attempt to treat with the French on the matter, and there was a conference, but the Turkish representatives were not even acquainted with the geography

of the territory, and the only result of the conference was that the French "rectification" of her frontier came within six miles of Ghadames and reached forward on both sides of it, so as to include a large number of the wells. The trade follows the wells. It is stated that so ignorant were the Turks of their own African dominion that at the outbreak of the war, when the Sultan asked for a map, there was not one to be found.

Not only have the French diverted much of the caravan trade into Tunis, but the opening up of Nigeria has meant that traffic from the south-west of the Sahara is drawn to the Atlantic along the course of the Niger. On the north-west the Algerian railways are also beginning to tap that great reservoir of commercial potentiality, while since the fall of the Mahdi the trade of the south-east tends to return to the Nile route. But while the Hinterland trade with Tripoli has almost fallen to vanishing-point, and for the present is entirely suspended on account of the war, it is believed that the Soudan will always look for an outlet on the Mediterranean; and the fact that the route to Tripoli is five or six hundred kilometres shorter than any other, and possesses an almost continuous line

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of oases, gives ground for hopes that the Italians will, when they have made the roads safe, be able to make Tripoli again the chief port for the caravan trade. And with the trade, and the constructional work that will be carried out, labour will also be attracted back again. Let it be said to the credit of the Turks, however, that an eleventh-hour attempt was made to stop the leakage of trade. About a year ago the Governor-General of Tripolitania advertised a contract for making a ten-mile highway road from Tripoli in the direction of the Tunisian frontier, taking good care that none but Turkish subjects were allowed to bid for the work. It was proposed to institute an automobile service, and the road was actually commenced—a display of energy which surprised everybody, because few believed the project would ever be carried out.

It seems certain that, so far as minerals are concerned, there is no Eldorado waiting to be discovered in the new colony, although the vigilance and jealousy of the Turks have kept the mountain region “wropt in mystery” in so far as geological exploration is concerned. The few travellers who have penetrated these regions were not mining engineers, and the San Filippo and



MAKING A NEW ROAD.



CAMELS TRANSPORTING TIMBER AT TRIPOLI.



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Sforza Missions sent out by the Italian Government some time ago have been unable to communicate their conclusions, because they are at present lost to civilisation. Arabs belonging to caravans from the Hinterland have been seen in Tripoli market offering for sale small nuggets of silver, which they declared came from the Gebels, and others have traded gold-dust, but it is doubtful whether gold or silver are really to be found in the territory embraced by Libya. The Italian mining engineer Cortezzi, who has had a great deal of experience in North Africa, having been through the whole of Tunis and the greater part of Egypt, speaking from reports given him and from geological specimens, says that in the Highlands there are to be found sulphurous layers, or, at any rate, there is sulphurous lime, analogous and coeval with that of Sicily and Roumania, although, until further investigation is made, it cannot be known whether the mineral is sufficiently rich to justify an extracting industry. His own opinion is that it will justify it, because of the great purity of the sulphur. The natives use it only as a medicine for camels with skin disease, but it is stated that years ago they did a little mining, and the product was sent to a sulphur company at Marseilles.



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It is practically certain, however, that there is a wealth of phosphates awaiting excavation, and, when France was "rectifying" her Tunisian frontier, it looked very much as if she had an eye on the phosphates which are to be found in the neighbourhood of Ghadames. Towards Egypt there are known to be vast layers of this precious mineral, and, although the quality is usually rather poor, yet it is fully expected that, as in Egypt, there will be discovered frequent patches of very rich phosphates. It is quite possible, therefore, that with two valuable components, sulphur and phosphate, the colony will take a leading place in the world for the manufacture of artificial manures. In the mountainous regions of Tripolitania there are also iron, zinc, lead, and possibly petroleum and lignite, signs of rich carbon deposits having been discovered quite close to Tobruk. Should mining industries be developed, therefore, it is likely that they will have an advantage over those of Tunis, because they are so much nearer the coast, and there is more water. A good quality of sandstone is to be found in various parts of the colony, but very little quarrying has been done by the natives. Along the coast of Cyrenaica there is enough salt to salt the whole of Europe.

## CHAPTER VI

### FUTURE OF LIBYA

WHAT are the Italians going to do with their new colony now they have got it? That is what other people who have had colonising troubles and trials of their own are wondering, because this will really be Italy's first attempt at anything of the sort. By common agreement Eritrea and Somaliland do not count as colonies in the ordinary sense of the word. And Italy is quite well aware of her inexperience in these matters, and that she has a lot to learn. But what she realises more than anything else is that she simply must either "make good" in this supreme trial of her colonising capacity, or bid farewell for ever to any hope of expansion, and expect the national atrophy and rapidly dwindling prestige that would most surely be the consequence of her failure. Therefore, since the first landing of her troops at Tripoli, all the talk of her withdrawal or of her compromising in any way was

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wasted breath. It is not war-fever nonsense, but downright earnestness, when Italy says she pledged herself to the last man and the last farthing in this enterprise. She has no delusions on the matter ; she is open-eyed and wide awake to all that success or failure means to her. Failure in the new colony would not only reduce her to a state of even greater helplessness, while the world around her was being devoured by other Powers, than if she had never gone to Tripoli at all, but even her own homeland would not be considered inviolate ; her citizens would lose all hope and faith in themselves, and be lacking in the patriotism so essential for a nation's successful defence.

But there is no mistaking Young Italy's determination and abounding enthusiasm in this matter, whatever may have been the failings of her forerunners in other attempts at colonising. She recognises that if this is her first real trial, it is her first real chance, and if due regard to the successes and failures of other colonising schemes counts for anything, then the Italians are likely to make but few blunders. For the men who are charged with responsibility in this matter add to their enthusiasm as pioneers an astonishingly complete understanding of the science and history

of colonising, which is the outcome of many years' close study, and betrays a "longheadedness" with which Italians have rarely been credited. And even if the Government officials had been unprepared with plans for founding a colony, since the annexation of Libya there has been no lack of gratuitous advice. It has poured in from all sides, from sociologists, ex-Ministers, members of Parliament, prominent publicists, land reformers, Socialists, engineers, and jurists. While it has somewhat bewildered the heads of the Government, it has been an encouraging revelation of the people's support and interest in the new work.

One thing has been made abundantly clear, and that is that there is plenty of capital available for developing the new colony. The formation of a group of Milanese business men who are subscribing a capital of 20,000,000 lire is but one instance of the eagerness of capital to participate, which, to say the least, does not suggest that Libya is the exhausted land it is often made out to be by depreciating critics. Capital is not prone to allow its patriotism to run away with its business common-sense. It is among the smaller capitalists, the farmers, and the tradesmen, that the eagerness to go to Tripoli is perhaps the

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greatest, especially in the south and in Sicily, where they have been drawing their little savings from the banks in preparation for the journey to the new land. And among the people who have nothing to invest but their labour, the strength of their hands, there is also an embarrassing enthusiasm which has decisively settled the question as to whether they prefer to emigrate to America where they will be ruthlessly exploited by strangers who have no interest in them except for what can be got out of them, or to seek a living in the more sympathetic environment of a country which is not far removed from the Fatherland, and which they can call their own.

Naturally, this exuberance of enthusiasm led to a rush for permits to go and visit Italian Africa, and in less than six weeks after the troops had landed, over 20,000 applications had been received for special passports to Tripoli. This was very gratifying, but the Government was not inclined to commit any blunders, and made it as difficult to get to Tripoli as it used to be considered for a rich man to get to heaven. Every one had to produce vouchers for the capital they possessed, and a fine discrimination was exercised as to the character of the would-be pioneers. A certain number of passports were granted for

each town and district, and the local authorities had to stand responsible for the good character as citizens of those to whom the passports were given. But before any civilians were allowed to land, the King had taken good care to promulgate a decree which effectually nipped in the bud any hopes of land speculators. To General Caneva was given full power to forbid the buying or selling of any territory, gardens, quarries, mines, rights of fishing, and of the use of water for industrial and agricultural purposes, until such time as definite rules for the administration of the colony had been established. Any conveyance of land or rights in defiance of this enactment would be rendered invalid, as also any contracts made since the Italian occupation prior to this order being promulgated. As was to be expected, the King's decree cut athwart a good many speculative transactions, for the bombardment of Tripoli had sent up its value exceedingly. Some people were heard to grumble that they were going to be worse off under their own Government than they had been under the benevolent rule of the Turks, which expression of discontent King Victor Emmanuel may take as unbiased testimony to the efficacy of his decree. Far from being arbitrary, the Government has shown itself



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desirous of giving individual initiative and enterprise a fair chance ; but, above that, it desires to secure the rights not only of those who are " here to-day and gone to-morrow " with a pocketful of money, but of those who are going to invest their all, to seek a living and a permanent home in the new colony. But for this provision and precaution it would doubtless have gone hard with the schemes for founding a colony of peasant proprietors, and the economic future of Libya would have been compromised.

Commendatore Luigi has been sent out to Tripoli by Signor Sacchi, the Minister of Public Works, to study the whole problem. This eminent engineer was for many years in Argentina, where he created as if by a miracle that most important naval and military station, Baja Blanca. He is very optimistic about the new colony, because he was not long in Tripoli before he came to the conclusion that the land is much more valuable and much more favourable to agriculture than that of South America. After making a tour of inspection, and an examination of the properties of the soil, and the state of its growing vegetation, he ridiculed the idea that great waterworks are absolutely essential to the revival of agriculture. He knows from his own

experience of the Argentine that human labour and activity, well organised, are the most important factors ; and these are just what have been lacking in Libya. Many regions in South America of greater aridity than Tripolitania have been made fertile by the modern methods of agricultural science, a branch of knowledge in which the Americans claim to lead the world. It is not meant to deny the advantages of big supplies of water, but to show that with even a moderate supply the modern farmer can make the soil yield a good harvest. Commendatore Luigi points out that while the average rainfall of the Argentine is but 350 millimetres, that of Tripolitania is little less than 500 millimetres, and what Italian immigrants can do in America they can surely accomplish in the new colony.

It was quickly decided by Commendatore Luigi that the first essential work was the construction of a port at Tripoli, and it was not long before he produced a plan of a fairly ambitious character, which was immediately adopted. The line of rocks running out from the old port makes an excellent foundation for the northern sea-wall, which will be extended well beyond the actual harbour as a breakwater. The port will be nearly square in formation, 1,800 metres by 1,500 metres,

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thus providing an anchorage that will put in the shade many old-established European ports. The ends of the enclosing piers are to come within 250 metres, this gateway being at the point where ships of heavy draught may easily enter. The scheme is so planned that the most essential parts can be commenced and completed first. Contrary to expectations, there is not much dredging to be done. The need for a breakwater is very urgent, as the transport service has found to its cost. The severe northern gales absolutely cut off communication with the coast, and it has been a frequent occurrence that the city has been without a mail service from two to three weeks. During the gales of December troops could not be landed, and they had to be taken back to Sicily until better conditions prevailed. But while the lines of rock at Tripoli render construction of the harbour comparatively easy, the problem at Bengasi is a most difficult one, the roadstead being very open. It is of the greatest importance, however, that the work of constructing a safe harbour should be taken in hand at once, because Tripoli is destined to have a big traffic. In the meantime temporary landing-places are to be provided. Tobruk, of course, will have special attention, because of its special character, and

Homs and Derna also demand ship-shape port accommodation.

Commendatore Luigi maintains that the construction of an up-to-date port at Tripoli will be a good "business proposition" for the Government, as the imposition of tariffs something like those which obtain in the colonial harbours of France and England will result in a good rate of interest on the investments. At a rough estimate he says that the outside cost should be under ten million francs ; an item of information that was pleasant news to the Government, who had contemplated the possibility of a figure very much higher. At Gargaresch, close to Tripoli, has been found an abundance of stone which is already being quarried.

For the city of Tripoli itself, Commendatore Luigi is planning a bright future. As far as possible the character of the old city will be respected and left unchanged, except where it is necessary to introduce modern methods for ensuring its cleanliness and illumination. The "local colour" is to be preserved even at some cost. The modern town will extend on either side, and it is predicted that it will become one of the most beautiful garden cities in the world. The early institution of tramways will obviate the crowding together

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of dwelling-houses and guarantee that the beautiful environs are developed for residential purposes. The Sindaco has presented a report showing that the municipality owns a great deal of property in the town, from which the revenue will jump up at once from 200,000 to 300,000 lire, as a consequence of increased values. Thus there is a fund ready for improvements. The town at present stands in great need of a permanent water-supply, and an up-to-date scheme is in hand for bringing the water from the spring at Ain-Zara, less than five miles away. Commendatore Luigi confesses his impatience to see this accomplished, so that he can watch the astonishment and admiration of the natives when they see rising from fountains in the principal piazza beautiful jets of fresh water sparkling in the sunlight. He has a great belief in miracles of that kind for convincing backward peoples of the blessings of civilisation.

The problem of fighting the invading sands of the desert does not daunt this enterprising engineer, who combines with his expert knowledge, which has been hammered out of actual experience, an enthusiasm which is infectious. He had to fight, and he conquered, the sand-dunes in Argentina, where they are of much greater mobility than

those of Libya. In one place a battery of cannon which had been set down in the evening was next morning entirely buried in sand. To-day that locality is perfectly stable, for in three years Commendatore Luigi had grown a belt of eucalyptus-trees round it. Behind them he kept big flocks grazing so as to harden and manure the earth, which to-day produces a wealth of vegetables. In Tripoli he is sanguine of the same success. Tamarisk, eucalyptus, and maritime pine trees are to be planted extensively all along the littoral zone, and the water of the skies and the night humidity are expected to be sufficient for the purpose. Behind this barrier, until such time as extensive irrigation schemes can be accomplished, the latest dry-farming science is to be utilised, and market-gardening and fruit-growing are to be encouraged.

In this respect it is interesting to note that there is a strong desire that the new colony should become ethnically as well as politically Italian. And to this end it is urged that the system which has done so much to bring about the revival of agriculture in the homeland should be applied in Libya—namely, that relatively small holdings should be created, and that these should be worked by Southern Italians, who for so long



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have formed the bulk of the emigrants for foreign lands. Only on such conditions can the colony become truly Italian. "We must be careful," says one writer, "that the misfortune does not befall us that vast territories become the absolute and tangible property of a small group of capitalists who might use Arab labour instead of Italian as being cheaper. The Italian can compete as a man and as a working proprietor, but perhaps could not compete equally with the Arab in the matter of remuneration." It is realised that unless the Italian is given a "stake in the country" he will need some inducement to refuse the higher remuneration offered in America, although his sense of patriotism is very strong, and his love for his homeland and desire to be near it could not very well be stronger than it is. The Italian is the ideal colonist for Libya; he has simply made Tunis and Algiers for France, not to mention his pioneering work on big schemes all over the world. But he must be given a fair chance, and then there will be no doubt as to what he will make of the new colony, and there will be no further need for French Parliamentarians to worry about what they call "the Italian peril" in Tunis. It is hoped that the Bank of Sicily may be induced to come to the assistance of the

pioneers, and that when the system of small holdings has been introduced, strong encouragement will be given to the establishment of co-operative agricultural banks on the Raiffeisen model. Then indeed a real expansion of the Fatherland could be made. It is particularly hoped that, in the event of the opening up of mining industries, the Government's foresight will guarantee that the Italian workmen are not subjected to conditions like those which prevail in the mining districts of Tunis. Here, in striking contrast to the rich quarters of the commercial classes, the miners are to be found living in a state not far removed from abject squalor.

The problem of native labour will probably be as difficult in Tripoli as it has been found to be in the French colonies. Compared with European standards the Arab is indolent. He is certainly not a successful cultivator of the soil. He will only plant and till in his rough way, which is just sufficient to meet the wants of his family; and being of a nomadic character he has no interest in improving the land. When one district becomes distasteful, or littered up with his own refuse, he will move on to another. But the Arabs have shown that they can work when taught how to work. This can be seen any

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day in Tunis, where, even when of slight of stature, they perform prodigious feats of manual labour. And a few minutes at the wharves in Tripoli, since the Italian occupation, is sufficient to show how the Arabs can work when they get the encouragement of something like reasonable wages. A short time ago a mill was being built in Tripoli, and Arabs were among the labourers employed. At first they began to carry the sand and other ingredients required, in small baskets and in a leisurely way ; but when they were shown how to use wheelbarrows they proved as efficient workmen as the Europeans. They work better with Italians than with men of any other nationality, because the Sicilian and Southern Italian has very much in common with the Arab, and they are all very sympathetic towards each other. This has been demonstrated in Tunis, where the Arabs were practically unmanageable when obliged to work alongside of other than Sicilians. Perhaps the similarity of climate has something to do with the similarity in their jealous regard for their women folk. The Fezzan and Soudanese negroes are also good workers, although up till now their work has been merely that of caretakers and domestic servants. A large number





THREE PARTICULAR  
YOUNG FRIENDS OF  
THE AUTHOR.



ARAB TYPES.



BEDOUIN DOMICILE.

of them are freed slaves. All the Fezzans are born good cooks.

It is generally agreed that the development of agriculture must take precedence of all else ; but there can really be no choice in the matter until the cessation of hostilities has once more opened up the Hinterland for commerce. The many Roman reservoirs, completely abandoned by the Arabs, but still to be found in an excellent state of preservation, can easily be put into workable order again at a comparatively small cost ; and of course artesian wells will be constructed as in Tunis. If the Government continues its present policy, voracious speculation in land will be guarded against ; and societies with assured capital may be given that perfect security of tenure which is necessary to intensive cultivation. Land will be put down to barley and wheat, and plenty of pasturage must be assured ; but for the present much energy will be put into the raising of fruits and vegetables. Afforestation will be in the hands of the State. The cultivation of the silk-worm will be facilitated by the presence of a large number of mulberry-trees. Cyrenaica especially will develop its trade in horses, sheep, and cattle—a business that was starved by the Turkish maladministration ; and ostrich-farming



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is likely to be attempted on a large scale, in view of the excellent market for feathers. Systematic research is already established to ascertain the possibilities of tobacco and cotton growing, which, even with the primitive methods of the natives, seem to give such good results. The esparto trade, which is capable of enormous extension, in view of its use for paper-making, is of course arrested for the present owing to the hostilities, which cut off communications with the esparto fields.

The crying need for roads has also to rest unsatisfied for this same reason, although the only chance of again securing the Hinterland traffic, which has either been diverted into other countries or suspended owing to war, lies in prompt action in the matter of roads, with plenty of capital to back it. Notwithstanding the patient efforts of England in Upper Nigeria, and the activities of the French in Tunis and Algiers, there remains in favour of Italy the fact that the route from the Soudan to Tripoli is 600 kilometres shorter than any other, that there are more frequent oases, and the sands are less agitated by the winds. In fact the English competition in Nigeria may be regarded as a negligible quantity if the northern routes are made safe,

for the Soudanese will always prefer to trade with the Mediterranean. Ghadames must be made secure, and a good safe road established between Murzuk and Ghat, while all merchants from the central Sultanates must be protected on their way to the central market of Ghadames, which they have always favoured. Then will it be conclusively proved that the new colony is not the meatless bone it is made out to be by jealous people. The Italians will doubtless find it more profitable to utilise the Tripoli Arab merchants as middlemen, providing them with wares, and giving them security, than to compete directly with them. The trading instincts and enterprise of the Tripolitan Arabs can be counted on as a very useful asset.

It is too early yet, perhaps, to speak of the development of a railway system and its possible effect upon the rapidly growing commerce of the interior; but there are not wanting instances indicating that the Italian Government is going ahead with its eyes open in this direction. If anything more were needed to show how thoroughly the Italians are waking up, it would only be necessary to point out that while it took them fifteen years to think about a railway in Eritrea, and five more to get a small portion laid down, before

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they had been three months in Tripoli they were already commencing to make a railway. With great foresight they abandoned the first idea of a line on the Décauville system, which was necessary to serve the troops at Ain-Zara, and to back them up in their advance, and decided on the laying down of a track with a broader gauge, which will require comparatively little reorganisation when the time arrives for its use as a commercial railway, and the possible linking up of it with other North African systems. All red tape has been cut through, and nothing is to stand in the way of the railway, which will be extended as far and as fast as the military advance will allow. The Italian State railways are contributing men and materials, and the rolling-stock and general equipment ready for the complementary line in Sicily have been shipped over to Tripoli instead. The engineers are practically treading on the heels of the soldiers; so much so, that they had once to stop their work in order to deal with the enemy. How long it will be before they can get right into the interior is a matter of guesswork. It took the English ten years to prepare their campaign against the Mahdi by the construction of a long line of railway from Wadi Halfa to Berber.

The recent occupation of the Sollum by the British was fully expected and hoped for by the Italians, on account of the considerable leakage of contraband arms and supplies for the Turks; and it has stimulated speculation in the possibilities of uniting with the Khedival railway, which is to serve the whole region between Alexandria and Cyrenaica, and which, despite Turkish discouragement, has nevertheless been pushed forward at a very rapid rate, and at no very distant date will join up Alexandria with the Gulf of Sollum. It was originally a light agricultural railway, and it is due solely to the acumen of the Khedive that the greater part of the line is now of normal gauge. If these lines were linked up with an Italian system in Libya, then, starting from Alexandria and going at an average of twenty-five miles an hour, one could reach the border of Cyrenaica in less than nine hours, and be in Tripoli in about twenty-four hours. What such a development might mean in relation to the Indian mail can well be imagined if we reflect that with a steamship service between Tobruk and Brindisi something like twenty hours would be saved. This war has demonstrated that the Italians know the value of "the use of the imagination

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in science," and they are keenly alive to the possibilities of aerial transport, which, when perfected, will completely subjugate the desert to the uses of civilisation.

Then again, one has only to glance at the map to see how much the value of the German Cameroons, and the more recently acquired Congo Territory, depends upon a direct commercial route through Murzuk to Tripoli. Already a scheme has been discussed for bringing a line in the Cameroons to the borders of Libya, where the Italians might link up and effect a through service. The scheme is an ambitious one, and would revolutionise the commerce of the whole of North Africa. It would make of Tripoli one of the most important commercial ports in the world. However, as the main supporters of the scheme have been German capitalists, there has so far been good reason to doubt whether it would meet with Italy's approval.

But even the best laid schemes are dependent upon an unknown quantity—the character of the resistance which the tribes of the interior are going to give to the spread of European domination. The participation of the Arabs in this struggle between Italy and Turkey has complicated matters considerably, because the Italians had

very good reasons for believing that their occupation of Tripoli would have proved acceptable to the coast tribes, who, as traders, had been showing a disposition to favour Italians. It is quite possible, however, that when no further Turkish pay is forthcoming, these particular Arabs will experience a cooling down of the religious fanaticism which the wily Turks have played upon to an unlimited extent, and that after a few sporadic outbursts they will accept the Italian *fait accompli*. Then there are the wild men of the desert, the famous Tuareg, who rob and pillage the caravans and generally make the lives of the other tribes a burden to them. A large number of the Tuareg live at Ghadames and Ghat, and there is likely to be trouble with them; but it is not considered insuperable.

It is commonly held, however, that the pacification of the natives and the European advance depend upon the attitude of the religious sect known as the Senussi, although some French writers affect to depreciate the influence this famous brotherhood is said to have on the North African tribes. The Senussi are credited, rightly or wrongly, with agitating a "jihad" or Holy War against the European invader, whether



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French, British, Italian, or Spanish ; but so far as is known, they have not shown their hand against Italy in the present war. Indeed, it is known that the Senussi have treated the Turks with contempt, looking upon them as a species of heretics, in whose hands there can never be any hope for the preservation of Islam. They have repeatedly refused to receive the envoys of the Sultan, moving off into the desert when they arrive. Constantinople had no delusions with regard to the power of the Senussi, whose chief has a far wider influence than the Mahdi ever had, and knew that its only hope of making the Ottoman dominion paramount throughout Libya lay in winning their good favour. Three years ago the Turkish Government sent a mission, headed by the Vali of Bengasi, to treat with the Senussi, and to induce them to accept a Turkish garrison at Cufra, their headquarters. The Turkish envoy is reported to have started out with great ostentation, riding a magnificent mare, but the only result of his mission was that he returned astride a pitiful little donkey. The chief of the Senussi had "commandeered" the magnificent mare. It is notorious that nearly all the tribes were considerably in arrears with the payment of the taxes the Turks had sought to impose upon

them, and troops had to be employed to do the tax-collecting. Once, near Derna, a tribe which was strongly Senussite received such a sudden visit from the Turkish soldiers that they had no time to hide a quantity of barley which was stacked in sheaves. The chief was sitting near the barley when the Turkish officer came up and demanded to know to whom the barley belonged, because no tax had been paid on it. The chief coolly threw four cartridges on to the barley, and quietly replied: "It belongs to those four little old men sitting on the top of it." The tax was not collected!

The power of the Senussi is temporal as well as spiritual. Its missionaries, than whom no cult can show more devoted men, are to be found everywhere. When they have made converts, they hand over arms to them, which they invest with a great spiritual meaning—the disciples are made to feel that in the proper use of these weapons rest their spiritual salvation and the very existence of Islam. From the chain of monasteries a watchful eye is kept over the tribes, and the government could not very well be more complete than it is. A tenth is the tribute the believers gladly give to the monasteries, and as a consequence the Head of the Senussi and his chief

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officers have amassed enormous wealth. Imposts are also paid by the caravans which pass by Cufra to Cyrenaica, for which they are guaranteed greater security on the road than they could expect from the Turks. Justice is administered by the Senussi, and even in the littoral of Cyrenaica, rather than use the Turkish courts, the tribes took their differences to them. Naturally, the Head of the Senussi is able to dispose of thousands of armed tribesmen, and if it is true that he is organising an extensive Holy War—which may be considered as a commercial war—then there is a great deal of trouble brewing for the European nations, and no pacification of the interior of Libya can be expected for a long time. However, signs have not been wanting that, menaced as they are by the British from the Egyptian side, and by the French from Tunis and Algeria, the Senussi are alive to the disaster which would come upon them if they were deprived of all their sources of wealth by being cut off entirely from the Mediterranean and boxed up in the desert. Indeed, even before the Turco-Italian hostilities commenced, the Head of the Senussi had begun to treat with the Italians through his emissaries at Bengasi, and the Italians had actually been allowed to establish an agency on the oasis of

Cufra, a very great privilege indeed ; while merchants of the Senussite tribes in Cyrenaica had begun to have transactions with the Banco di Roma at Bengasi.

If Italy is able to convince this undoubtedly powerful sect that the Italian occupation will give every trading facility, and has nothing of an anti-Islam aspect, then it will have achieved something very great indeed, something that no other colonising Power has achieved. Italy did, indeed, show herself eager to placate the Arabs, and to respect their religion ; it was this eagerness which was directly responsible for the massacre of the Italian troops by the Tripoli Arabs, and which was followed by those stern reprisals that made the invaders' task heavier instead of lighter. But even after the massacres, while not too much reliance was placed upon the word of the Arab, and hanging was the lot of the secreters of arms, the Italians were at great pains to respect the religious susceptibilities of the Arabs. Soldiers were forbidden to enter mosques ; although these places of worship were known to be the hatching-ground of plots, because of their immunity from the "infidel." The Arabs were requested to continue their prayers, which had been suspended because of the hostilities, and the Muezzin soon appeared

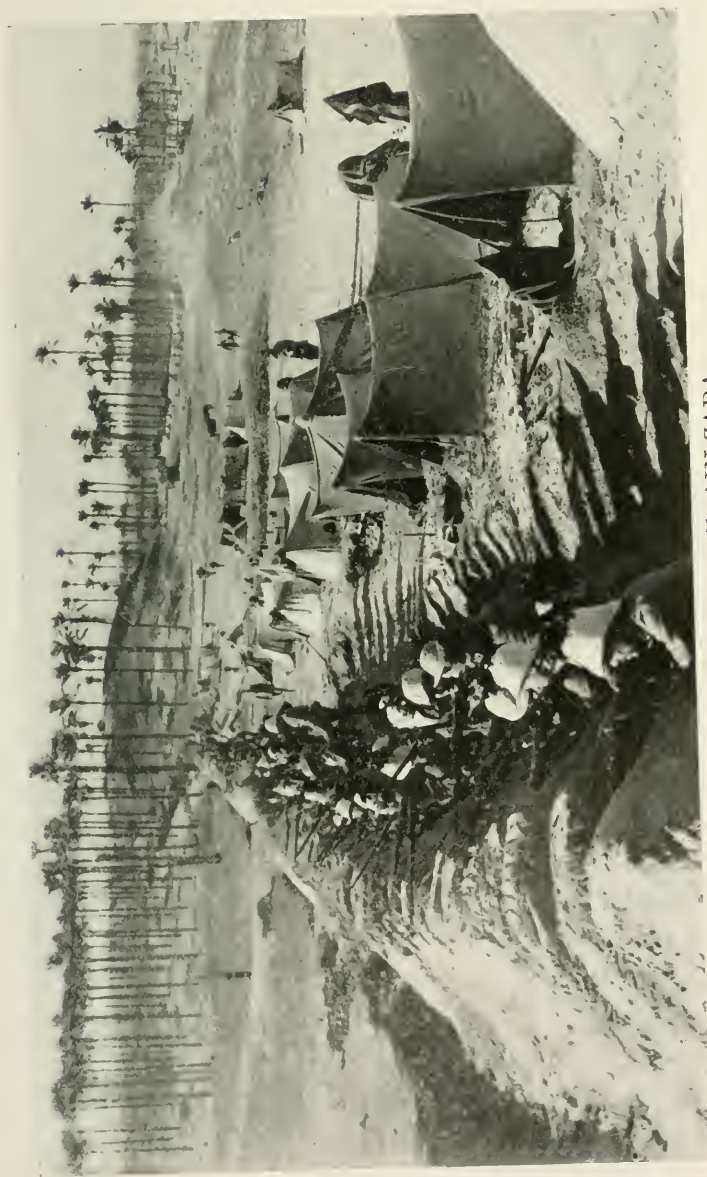
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on the minaret again. Hassuna Pasha Karamanli, of the old reigning house in Tripolitania, was selected as Mayor of Tripoli, and at the feast of Cheker Bairam, according to the old custom, the Italian authorities distributed a few hundred sheep and great quantities of barracans among the Arabs, much to their surprise and delight. They were made to feel that no hindrance would be placed in the way of their religious observances. It has been decided, as far as possible, to use the Moslem administrative machinery, and, so far as Tripoli is concerned, this has already given great satisfaction to the Arabs. The Cadi will be allowed to retain much of his old jurisdiction, and no harsh attempt will be made to withdraw the children from the "education" they receive in the mosques, except by demonstrating that a far better education will be available to them in the Italian schools, where, indeed, Arabic is already being taught. In this respect, tribute must be paid to the Italian school system which had been established in Tripoli and Cyrenaica long before the occupation, and was accomplishing a great work, not only of an educational, but also of a moral character among the youth of the indigenous peoples. So that if the invaders do not succeed in winning the trust





ITALIAN TRENCH AT AIN-ZARA.





and favour of the natives, it will not be for the want of trying.

And the Italians are dreaming, too, while they work. Domenico Tumiatì has a vision of the future as he stands on the deck of a home-going steamer, and gazes out over Libya: "The roadsteads of Tripoli, of Homs, of Misurata, of Bengasi, of Derna, of Bomba, are fortified and protected. Their splendid harbours are crowded with ships, loading and unloading the riches of Africa and the industrial products of Italy. A light electric railway branches out from Tripoli in all directions of the oasis, pushing as far as the mines of Fossato and Jeffren. Here it divides into two arteries, one going as far as Ghadames and Murzuk; while the other joins Bengasi to the sulphur mines and the salt-pans of Sert and the oases of Baka, pushing as far as the Egyptian frontier. On the south they are working busily on the Red Sea to join Italian Eritrea with Mediterranean Italy—Tripoli with Ethiopia. Italy, the rival of England and France, is camped on two seas, having an extension of a million square kilometres, with a population that is all her own, multiplying rapidly by the side of the exhausted Arab race; the earth, turned over by thousands of ploughs,

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gives forth an almost bizarre luxuriance ; borers multiply the Roman wells ; the waters of the Gebels are canalised, carrying their currents everywhere ; while the pinnacles of lofty factory chimneys cut the horizon. At Zanzur, at Gharian, at Imsellata, at Derna, stand lovely Italian villas surrounded by palms, and on their loggias we see our beautiful women enjoying the evening air amid masses of jasmine."

## CHAPTER VII

### POLITICAL ITALY

ITALY can fairly claim to be the most democratic nation in the world, and this will be supported enthusiastically by practically every Britisher who is privileged to live among the Italians. In fact, British residents never tire of expatiating upon this theme, although it has been varied of late by the most fierce denunciation of the "people at home," who appear not only unwilling to subscribe so enthusiastically to Italian virtues, but actually have ventured to condemn the Italians as the enemies of civilisation and progress. It is not sufficient to explain to these zealous defenders of Italy that the anti-Italian feeling is, where it is conscious and positive, confined to a limited area, and for the rest is founded upon ignorance; they will not listen to the slightest excuse. And the longer one lives in Italy, the more patent does it become that these outlanders who have made their homes here are

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absolutely right. The utter absence of class distinctions is at first a little bewildering to a person coming from a country where, whatever pretensions it may have to democracy, a sharp look-out must be kept so as not to transgress the niceties of class distinctions. Prince or peasant, master or man, mistress or maid, it is all the same among the Italians; and it is not necessarily derogatory to the prince or flattery of the peasant to say that very often it is difficult to make out "which is which." The employee has as much sense of his own dignity as his employer, and any mistress of a household will tell you that as there is not the slightest trace of servility in Italian servants it is absolutely impossible to adopt towards them the attitude which is deemed essential, say, by British ladies, "to keep the servants in their place." This fact is one that immediately strikes the foreign visitor, and when he has lived longer in the land and become acquainted with all phases of life, he will find that the same spirit pervades the whole national life, public as well as private. The Italians are born democrats.

Victor Emmanuel is a most fitting head of this democracy, a sovereign who by the quiet force of his character has won the general esteem

of his subjects, and who by his undoubtedly Liberal opinions has covered with confusion the anti-Monarchists, who find themselves exceedingly embarrassed because Victor Emmanuel does not do the things for which as a rule monarchy is condemned. He was brought up with very strict and severe views of duty under the eyes of his mother and General Osio, an austere but cultured tutor. He adopted a military career in the most democratic branch of the Army, the Infantry, and worked exceedingly hard, rising from captain to the command of the Army Corps of Naples. This beautiful city, with its seductive life of gaiety, however, could not lure the quiet and almost ascetic Royal soldier from his military duties. It was not a surprise, therefore, that Victor Emmanuel took up the kingship without any ostentatious display, and settled down immediately to his more onerous duties instead of promoting great pomp and entertainment. He was warmly seconded in his policy of work and quietness by Queen Elena, who is looked upon in Italy as a model Queen and mother. While Victor Emmanuel was supposed to be poring over his magnificent collection of coins, but in reality was applying himself assiduously to the study of the social problems of his country, and keeping in



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embarrassingly close touch with his Ministers, the Queen was devoting herself to her children, her poetry, painting, and sculpture, and having merely a few intimate friends to five o'clock tea. When Court functions were resumed, there was only the quietest display, which, as can be imagined, was a disappointment to some people. During the terrible catastrophe at Reggio and Messina it was universally acknowledged that the Queen rose to heights of abnegation and self-sacrifice to which few women have been able to rise, and which undoubtedly impressed the whole world. When he visited the cities of Italy, the King also deprecated any great receptions, and the rule has been that rather than towns being the poorer for a Royal visit, they are the gainers by some gift from their King, who in his own personal appearance shows his contempt for the wonderful variety of rich uniforms which some people think are necessary to kingship.

All doubt as to his politics were set at rest when he put into the Government Giolitti and Zanardelli; and that this was not a sporadic outbreak of Liberalism was soon evident when Victor Emmanuel commenced his policy of surprise visits. Ministries, the Army and Navy, schools, barracks, hospitals, were stirred into

greater activity and efficiency because of his direct personal interest, and because they knew not the day nor the hour when this Royal inspector would descend upon them. Of course these methods are not so necessary nowadays, because the King, aided by the more efficient Ministers he has had of late years, has succeeded in communicating his own enthusiasm for efficiency to all branches of the Administration. Above all, Victor Emmanuel has succeeded in winning the esteem of the Socialists, who are generally reckoned to be irreconcilable. He was reported to be very disappointed when the Socialist leader, Bissolati, declined the offer of the Ministry of Justice. In 1910 Enrico Ferri, speaking on the Capitol in the presence of the King, pointed out that the Italian monarchy was a child of the Revolution, and declared that, with the stigma of divine right removed, the principle of a really democratic monarchy was not incompatible with Socialism.

It might almost be said that the Government suffers from too much democracy, for, glancing at the medley of parties and groups in Montecitorio, it really seems as if the motto is "Every man his own political party." The Government is nominally Liberal, but its policy is really of a more advanced order owing to the great

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influence exercised by the few strong Radicals in the Cabinet. The Liberals are slightly anti-Clerical and anti-Socialist, but for the present, because of Giolitti's promise to effect electoral reform, the Government *bloc* is maintained by the support of the Socialists. Otherwise the forty Socialist members are usually numbered among the Opposition. There is a band of twenty-five Republicans in the Extreme Left, who are in opposition, but they have very little influence. The Centre is occupied by the constitutional Opposition, headed by Sonnino, but this group has dwindled of late. In the Centre also is the Catholic group, which is also without influence, and generally to be found supporting the Government, whether Liberal or Conservative. On the Right is the group of the Liberal-Conservatives of the old school, acknowledging as leader Luzzatti. There are other small groups and independent deputies, presenting altogether one of the most curious Parliamentary make-ups in the world. And yet there has been a decided improvement of late years. Whatever may be the drawbacks of a two-party system, they are nothing like so formidable as those of a twenty-party system, and under the circumstances it is surprising that any legis



GIOVANNI GIOLITTI,  
Prime Minister.



lation is accomplished at all. Giolitti, Radical as he is, admits that it would conduce to the better functioning of the Parliamentary institutions if without delay there were formed a true Conservative Party—but only on the condition that it unfurled its banner and openly declared the programme it intended to follow if called to take charge of the Government.

Under these circumstances it is necessary that there should be a strong man at the head of affairs, and the Italians have certainly got that strong man in Giolitti. His personality dominates the Chamber: he has a genius for handling men. One element of his strength is that he looks upon power as a duty, and not as a satisfaction for his *amour propre*. He has never been keen to govern, and to the alarm of his friends he is always over-ready to abandon his post if it can be shown that others will do better. When he has been returned to power, it has always been by the force of circumstances and against his personal inclinations. But when in office he has never shown the slightest doubt as to his own fitness; and his confidence in his own capacity has begotten confidence in his followers. He is a Parliamentarian of the first order, his strength in this respect lying in his quick



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and clear vision of political situations. He is no waster of words, and knows how to put his case succinctly and forcibly, with now and then a touch of good-natured irony, which, however, never descends to sarcasm. He was known as a great fencer in his youth, and there is very much of the quick parry and thrust in his debating. He is undoubtedly in the first rank of European statesmen, and it is solely due to his personal power that the many refractory groups are induced to get any progressive legislation done at all. He has excellent judgment, however, in knowing exactly how much he may ask—but then he insists upon getting it. He has grown used to the charges that he is handing over the Government to the Socialists, remarking that such charges come strangely from those who make a loud boast of being followers of Cavour, who made alliances with the most extreme Left. Liberalism, he says, is fatally destined to fall into decay and despair if it closes the door against help from a more advanced party. Even the war has not lost the Government the Socialist support. Indeed, such men as de Felice, who has himself been to Tripoli, are enthusiastic supporters of the new policy.

Of the other Ministers the most distinguished

are the Marquis di San Giuliano, Foreign Minister, and the Hon. Francesco Nitti, Minister for Agriculture and Commerce. San Giuliano was a strenuous fighter when younger, and he had tremendous battles in Sicily with the Socialists on the one hand and the Conservatives on the other. He entered Parliament as a member of the Left, and has been more or less of a Radical ever since. He has been a consistent supporter of the Triple Alliance, both as a deputy and as a Minister. His superior knowledge of foreign affairs is acknowledged by all parties. When Ambassador in Great Britain, by his charm of character and his great scholarship, combined with this expert knowledge of international politics, he did much to enhance Italian prestige. Until a few years ago the Italian Foreign Office had admittedly little weight in the councils of Europe, but under Tittoni and especially San Giuliano a thorough reorganisation of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps has been effected, and Italy's representatives abroad have now no reason to be ashamed of their country's equipment in this respect.

Nitti might be said to be an ideal Minister of Agriculture and Commerce. Besides having an international reputation as a political economist,

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and being a capable statistician, he is one of the most witty and trenchant critics in Parliament. Some of the fiercest battles in the House of recent years have been fought round his head, but he has always been imperturbable, preserving the utmost good humour, and he has always gained his point. The insurance monopoly, when it becomes law, will owe much to Nitti's scientific exposition and his splendid debating capacity.

As to Spingardi, the Minister for War, and Leonardi-Cattolica, Minister of Marine, one need only point to the present acknowledged efficiency and good organisation of Italy's fighting forces. But in this respect it is necessary also to mention the splendid organising work done by General Pollio, Chief of the General Staff, and by Vice-Admiral Mirabello and Vice-Admiral Bettolo. Facta, the Minister of Finance, was perhaps handicapped by having to succeed several exceptional financiers, but he has well maintained the high reputation which Italian Government finance has gained within recent years. He was previously a Secretary of State together with Giolitti, and was then made Minister of Finance by Luzzatti, Giolitti continuing as Secretary of State. Facta is looked

upon as one of the men of the future. Tedesco, the Treasurer, adds to his great culture an extraordinary capacity for work, which he first showed as Minister of Public Works. Political prophets appear to have marked out Salandra and Bertolini for promotion, and even go so far as to say that they are future Prime Ministers. The former was a Minister several times under Sonnino and the Governments supported by Sonnino. The latter has been Minister of Public Works under Giolitti, and has shown promise of great capacity.

Sonnino, the leader of the Opposition, is a man of profound studies and special competence in finance, but he is not a Parliamentarian, and his ability to deal with the diverse elements to be found at Montecitorio was never sufficient to allow him ever to remain head of the Government for more than three months. His following, because they are always "agin the Government," whatever the question may be, and also because they are without a programme, have earned for themselves the title of "His Majesty's Anarchists." Luzzatti also is an acknowledged financial expert. He has strenuously defended Italy against foreign critics who make such a lot of talk about Italian corruption,

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and he has especially turned the tables on the English critics with an exposé of corruption in the House of Commons. Leonida Bissolati, leader of the Socialists, is an undoubted statesman, who pursues his policy with a commendable freedom from prejudice. Turati, another capable Socialist leader, is of the irreconcilable type, sometimes opposing his own party. Enrico Ferri has now practically retired from militant politics.

The present Prime Minister has set his heart on at least two pieces of constructive legislation, which, if his admitted power in dealing with the heterogeneous crowd at Montecitorio does not fail him, he will succeed in putting on the statute-book. The first is State monopoly of life insurance, and the second is a measure giving manhood suffrage. Nitti has charge of the former measure, and he caused dismay among the reactionaries when, in the discussion on the last Budget, he announced that the Government intended to effect this State monopoly of insurance without loss of time. The Government, in fact, has nailed it to the mast, and is determined that it shall go through, in spite of its being called a revolutionary and Socialistic measure. Nitti said it was Fortis who, when Prime Minister, first suggested that he should draw up a scheme

that would effect such a monopoly, and he added that Giolitti had pressed the study of the problem upon several of his (Nitti's) predecessors in the Ministry of Agriculture and Industry. Since Nitti made his announcement a Bill has been fashioned and is well through its committee stage, having by its sheer practical merits won a great deal of support among the members. The stage it has reached now is about equal to a second reading in the House of Commons. The fact that at present the greater part of the life insurance in Italy is done with foreign houses, and an enormous amount of capital goes out of the country in this way, has been a strong argument in its favour. Nitti received an avalanche of letters from the clerks and officials employed in these insurance offices, protesting against the measure, as it would mean that they would be thrown out of employment. But later came letters from many of the same men to state that they had been ordered to write the previous protests, and that they really would welcome State control. One poor argument against the Bill is that no such monopoly exists in any other country ;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It exists in New Zealand, not only for life insurance, but also for accident insurance.



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and this simply infuriates the present Italian Ministry, for if they have endeavoured to make their own and other people understand anything, it is that Italy is now old enough to stand on her own feet and think for herself—and that she is going to do so. It has been said in the past, with reference to what has been termed the mental servility of the Italians, that “Ours is a strange country, because those who inhabit the *patrie* of the Caesars and the Antonines dare not have an idea without somebody’s permission.” Nitti declares: “If you don’t mind, we *will* have an idea without anybody’s permission.” This remark is characteristic of the whole Italian attitude, to-day. Referring to the interests ranged in battle-array against the Government, Nitti said: “We have been invited to dare, and we are going to dare with this measure.”

Giolitti has adopted the same fighting attitude whenever he has referred to the measure, and he selected the occasion of a banquet held in his honour at Turin—it was a political banquet which nearly all “political Italy” attended—to get in a few straight home-truths. In the virulent campaign being made against the insurance project, its enemies have even gone so far

as to assert that it is an attempt against property and the beginning of the monopolisation of industries and absolute collectivism. But Giolitti pointed out that life insurance is not property and is not industry—it is simply speculation on a special form of savings, and often a very bad kind of speculation. No private insurance society can guarantee that it will meet its liabilities when they fall due, as those who have invested their savings in insurance policies sometimes find to their cost. And in insurance Italy is really an organised exportation of national savings, three-fifths of the whole insurance total being in the hands of foreign institutions. There is not the slightest reason why the State should not have the use of this capital, and the State alone is in a position to give absolute security.

Giolitti described as scandalous the speculative character of some of these foreign insurance houses. He instanced one as having made profits of 40 per cent., another 111 per cent., and one as even handing 122 per cent. interest to its shareholders. And when some of these profit-makers claimed that the Government was violating their rights, he replied that the Government could recognise no "right to exercise usury on

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the savings of the poor people." A strong point in favour of the new proposal is that it is not to have a fiscal character ; while providing the State with a very useful source of capital, the profit balances will be devoted to funds for old-age and invalidity pensions.

If the proposal to monopolise insurance gave a shock to the reactionaries, the Ministerial measure of manhood suffrage is for Italy a really revolutionary proposal ; and it has aroused the most violent opposition. It proposes to give the vote to all men who have reached the age of thirty years, which means that the electorate will be increased at one stroke from three millions to eight millions. The question as to what effect this will have on the character of Montecitorio provides an interesting subject of speculation. The literary test is to be abolished, and the tens of thousands of men who so far have been debarred from voting because they could not write their names on the ballot-papers will be admitted to the vote. The opponents of universal suffrage have immediately produced the old objection, that this admission of the illiterates will mean the triumph of ignorance and a set-back to progress. The antiquated character of the argument has not prevented it

from being "trotted out" again to do duty against the advance of democracy.

Giolitti himself is in charge of the measure, and he certainly does not underrate the forces arrayed against him. In season and out, he is inculcating into the Italians that they ought to be ashamed of themselves for being the last country in Europe to extend its electoral suffrage. He points out that, except in this respect, there has been progress all round: that industry and agriculture have prospered wonderfully, and labour has been able to wrest for itself better conditions, which in many instances amount to nearly a doubling of wages. Under these circumstances, he urges, it is not right that a nation which rose out of a revolution, and was constituted by plebiscites, should after fifty years continue to exclude from political life the most numerous class of society—those who give their sons for the defence of the country, and upon whom falls the largest measure of taxation for the maintenance of the State. Out of every 100 men of the qualifying age in Italy only 32 are electors, while in other countries the percentage of electors among those qualified ranges from 60 to 98.

The measure is in two parts. The first pro-

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vides against the corruption that takes place at elections, and the violence, which is often resorted to for the intimidation of voters. The second provides for the extension of the suffrage to all men of thirty years, of good character, who have done their military service. In fixing this age-limit the Government say that they are moved not only by considerations of social justice, but also by a conviction that the majority of the men who have had this ripe experience of life are no whit inferior in rectitude and good citizenship to those who have learned to read and write. Many opponents are stating that the measure does not extend the suffrage enough ; but Giolitti, who is practically staking his reputation upon the measure, so determined is he that it shall pass, does not conceal the fact that he regards such objections as a deliberate attempt to wreck the measure. He reminds the country that in 1901-2 when he dared to follow with firmness a policy of impartiality in the struggle between capital and labour, he was branded as the enemy of capital, the demolisher of private property, and one who would overturn the institutions of the country. The position to-day is a similar one, he says, and he advises his opponents to save their breath for the time when







VICE-ADMIRAL PASQUALE LEONARDI-  
CATTOLICA,  
Minister of the Marine.



PAOLO SPINGARDI,  
Minister of War.

the real fight on the suffrage will take place in Parliament. There is a strong women's movement in Italy, and their agitation for the vote has received great sympathy from the political leaders. However, at present the main energies of the women are being devoted rather to making women more fit generally for the duties of citizenship than to the mere getting of the vote.

It has been the custom, especially of British critics, to fall upon the Italians hip and thigh for the corruption prevailing in their Governmental administration. Indeed, to glance through the articles and books written a few years ago, one would think that these lovers of Italy were smitten by an epidemic of extreme morality. They brought their "million-power magnifying-glasses," and diligently dissected Italy's poor body-politic, and then set up such a howl of execration, that even the gentle Italians were persuaded that they must be the wickedest set of scamps on the face of the earth. And they gave credence to these critics' disproportionate diagnoses by going publicly into sack-cloth and ashes, and bemoaning that no good could come out of Italy. But after a while the tables were turned upon these reformers from outside, who were blind to the good points of Italy, or to the

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extraordinary difficulties she had to face, and could only see what they were looking for—facts with which to bolster up their case. Some writers have collected together all the little bits of “corruption” discovered over a period of many years, until they have got something like a formidable case, and then have produced this collection as if it were just a snapshot of the existing Italian Government. One wonders what would happen if these critics turned their magnifiers on things at home. Perhaps they have done so, and have been dismayed by the stupendous task which confronted them.

Ten years ago, however, Messrs. Thomas Okey and Bolton King wrote very magnanimously that “it is, however, easy to exaggerate the extent of the corruption. No Parliament is free from it. At all events, the Italian Chamber has fewer Parliamentary guinea-pigs than the House of Commons, perhaps because there are fewer opportunities for company promotion; there is far less manipulation of tariffs for private ends than in the United States, no more bribery of localities than in Canada.” After this, no doubt, the Italians felt that they might lift up their heads and breathe again. It is not denied that there was corruption, and that there may still be traces of

it, yet when one studies impartially the nature of the task set before this young country, her poverty, and her miserable equipment, honestly one must marvel that there was not more corruption, and that Italy has been able to accomplish so much that is good. The greater number of Italian political men have died poor. Any one who knows Italy intimately, knows that, compared with other countries, she is scrupulously moral in her public life, and so ruthless is the condemnation of any who are in the slightest degree suspected of wrong-doing that many innocent suffer with the guilty, for whom not the slightest pity is shown.

Education, or the comparative lack of it, has always been a sore point with the Italians. They are most sensitive indeed to the charges of illiteracy foreign critics commonly pile up against them; and as year after year and Parliament after Parliament went by without any apparent improvement of the educational system, it really did look as if the ruling classes cared nothing for the intellectual well-being of the poorer people. But here again the critics were often unfair in their condemnation, for little regard was paid to Italy's peculiar difficulties, and they were sparing in their praise, if they vouchsafed

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any, of the really good points in her favour. When United Italy and her leaders set about the building up of a national system of government, the English model was the one generally followed, and, without making due allowance for the difference in development of the people in the matter of governmental control, institutions which favoured local autonomy were provided for Italy. It was thought that there could be no danger in this, because the cities, at any rate, had for centuries been accustomed to the exercise of local government. But while the cities, because of the necessity for industrial developments, and their closer contact with the world outside, could be trusted to look after their own affairs, with a due regard to the demands of progress, the smaller communes were, of course, absolutely unfitted, often through sheer poverty, to take any responsibility. In many districts even roads were not considered necessary, and that part of public duty which was most important—education—was sadly neglected. True, the Italians were no worse than the English in this respect—any progress made in British education has been against the bitter opposition of the local “bumbles,” whose policy has always been to “save the rates”—yet the fact remains that that backwardness of which the Italian nation is

honestly ashamed was the inevitable result of entrusting the education of the youth of the countryside to men whose only use for children was as field-labourers.

But to-day there has been a revolution accomplished in Italian education. Conservative and Liberal statesmen alike were determined to make the communes pay for education whether they liked it or not ; and, of course, the Socialists were only too delighted. Under the Sonnino Ministry a Bill was drawn up by Daneo, the Minister of Public Instruction, with the aid of his most able Chief of Department, Camillo Corradini, which made education practically a national charge, and took away from the communes any power to hinder local education by withholding funds. Naturally, it aroused great opposition. There was the same outcry against it as in England, about its taking away the sacred rights of popular control ; but when, in the whirligig of politics, Giolitti came to power, the Bill had to go through, and was ably steered among the shoals of opposition by the new Minister for Public Instruction, Credaro. Provincial councils have been set up, very much after the type of the British County Education Committees ; and this will ensure a uniform policy, and fairness to the poor and backward districts. But



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the Government has kept control of the financial machinery, so as to prevent any local cheese-paring policy. It was obvious to the educational reformers that it was not enough to cram the child's brain while its little stomach lacked food, and measures for feeding the poorer children are being adopted which will put to shame some cities in Britain, where, while hundreds of thousands of pounds are spent upon costly school buildings, a penny a meal is begrudged to hundreds of children who have to go to school without any breakfast. So the charities have been taken in hand and are to be worked in an organised uniform manner alongside of the educational work. An extensive library movement is being actively pushed forward ; every class in the school is being provided with its own exclusive library. School savings-banks, gymnasia, manual instruction, continuation schools, schools for soldiers while doing military service, and schools for adults, are all included in the scheme ; and the next generation should see a wonderful advance made, and the population of the poorer districts will have reason to be glad that the intellectual education of their bairns was taken out of the hands of their taskmasters. Another important advance is the strengthening of the factory laws, which will, after July this year,

prevent boys and girls under fifteen years of age being employed in factories unless they have passed the sixth standard. The secondary-school system in the cities compares very favourably with that of other countries ; great advances have been made on the scientific and technical side, and there is, by the way, a growing demand for better provision for the teaching of English.

In the South, even now, before the new Act can begin to have any influence, substantial and successful efforts are being made to wipe out the stain of illiteracy. At the same time, as the editor of a Roman daily paper, who is a close student of the South, remarked to the writer, it must be borne in mind that it is not because the inhabitants have not been taught to write that they cannot write—for both at school and afterwards, while doing their service, they have acquired that art—but because afterwards they find absolutely no use for it, and their penmanship vanishes through disuse. The peasants, of course, work all the hours of daylight, and do not get the time for reading, but there are many successful commercial men, too, some controlling businesses worth forty or fifty thousand pounds, who can neither read nor write, and conduct their transactions only by word of mouth.

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The emigration factor, however, is working for good in this respect. The men and women, who have been away to other lands for a few years, come back with their savings to the home country, and they simply cannot rest without newspapers and reading matter. So that from among the people themselves there is coming a welcome movement towards higher intellectual attainments.

In the department of agricultural education the Italian Government is making great progress. Even the elementary school has included in its curriculum lessons giving elementary notions of agriculture, while some technical schools have an agricultural section. In the Universities of Rome and Bologna there are faculties of Agriculture; there is an Experimental Agricultural Institute at Perugia; there are schools of agriculture at Milan and Portici. Altogether there are twenty-five schools of practical agriculture, besides special schools for viticulture, pomology, zootechnique, cheese-making, and agrarian entomology. Some fifty valuable scholarships exist for practical study. The Ministry of War gives special encouragement to the instruction of soldiers in agriculture, and this is already bearing fruit in Tripoli, where the soldiers are filling in their time by the cultivation of the soil. There are about seventy

itinerary professorships, some of which are maintained directly by the Government. The lecturers go from one district to another giving instruction by direct experiments in the field to the peasant farmers, showing them how to get the best results. In Florence important work has been carried on for some time by the Institute of Colonial Agriculture, from which students are now going to the new colony. Of the agricultural schools for soldiers the best known is that at Rome directed by Professor Vittoria Nazari, of the Ministry of Agriculture.

The problems of public health which confronted the young nation might well have daunted the experienced reformers of older countries. In the good old days of the Church régime no such information as vital statistics was deemed necessary. A lot of people died, and on some occasions considerably more than on others; of what avail to trouble about "death-rates"? The people were dead, and that was all there was to say. The first death-rate to be made out was in 1863, showing a mortality of 30·90 per thousand. In 1887 it was still 27·95; but by 1909 it had been reduced to 20·30. In Rome, although her hospitals catered for the sick of the notoriously unhealthy Campagna, the death-rate

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in 1907 was only 18·80 per thousand. From being one of the most unhealthy countries in the world, Italy has now come to have one of the cleanest bills of health. In 1882 she had 374,229 people over seventy-five years old, and in 1901 she had no less than 551,597, of whom no less than 10,000 were over ninety years of age.

The great scourge of Italy was malaria, the presence of which not only rendered vast territories incapable of cultivation, but carried off the people by the thousand. In 1879 in the hospitals of Rome alone there were 23,000 malaria cases ; and in 1898 out of 8,258 communities, 2,823 had malaria in a serious form, while 2,025 had visitations of a milder degree. The average deaths in a year from the disease were 15,800, while in the country around and south of Rome there were 560,000 cases yearly. Two million hectares of land were rendered absolutely uninhabitable. In 1900 began the scientific war against the disease, the case against the mosquito having been proved most conclusively. The Government established a monopoly of quinine, and employers were obliged by law to distribute it free among their workpeople, and see that they took it ; and liberal supplies were doled out and forced upon the poor. The malaria districts were mapped out for the

war, and the King gave great help to the expeditions of medical men and nurses sent out to take charge. Suspected cases were hardly allowed out of sight. Mosquito-screens were ordered for doors and windows, and where the people were too poor to purchase them, the public subscribed funds to fix them up. The happy result was that while before the quinine campaign 50 per cent. of the population in the affected areas had malaria, afterwards there were only 4 per cent. of cases. In the Campagna Romana alone the percentage of cases was reduced from 31 in 1900 to 2 in 1908.

Another dreaded scourge of the Italians, especially in the valley of Po, is the disease pellagra, which in extreme cases eventually produces madness. The disease is attributed to the eating of bad qualities of maize, a staple article of food in the affected area. The Government also promoted a vigorous campaign against this trouble, and, besides cultivating considerable areas of the best maize, gave assistance to private growers, with the consequence that much of the bad quality of maize has ceased to be grown. In addition, stoves were built to ensure the proper drying of the maize, which is not always effected by the picturesque custom of festooning the corn-



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cobs around the loggia and lintels of the houses. Communal kitchens were also introduced, so that the quality of the food is now far higher than formerly. In 1881 there were no less than 104,067 cases of pellagra, but by 1908 this number had been reduced to 36,339 ; and while in 1889 the cases of madness directly caused by this disease were 901, in 1908 there was a reduction to 335 cases.

The authorities, however, have carried their "prevention-better-than-cure" policy much farther. The badness and paucity of the water-supplies in Italy had a world-wide notoriety, and the stigma still rests to-day, because, on the strength of a Baedeker's warning of thirty years ago, it is still the "correct thing" among timid visitors to boycott the water-bottle, and in many cases quite prominent teetotalers, when in Italy, have felt "driven" to Chianti out of fear for what might befall. But the Italian cities now have water-supplies second to none, and in the country districts huge schemes have been carried out whereby, with the exception of one part of Italy, where a stupendous undertaking is at present in hand, the country districts are now provided with abundant supplies of the best drinking-water. In this particular respect alone the progress made



SIDNEY SONNINO,  
Leader of the Opposition.



is almost incredible considering the obstacles in the way.

Even as late as 1902, the number of recruits for the Army turned down as unfit was no less than 50 per cent. So there began a great epidemic of physical culture, drill, and sports. The local authorities provided gymnasia; boys brigades were started, and physical instruction was introduced into the schools; and there is now to be seen a wonderful change in the quality of the recruits who present themselves. The manner in which they have acquitted themselves in the war—for many of the least experienced troops were sent to the front—has shown the results of the efforts to improve the public physique and health. The comparative absence of sickness among the troops has been one of the many marvels of the war. It is interesting to note that so keenly has the enthusiasm for sports seized upon the youth that in very self-defence the Church has been forced to sanction sports among its theological students, and, sad to relate, fears have been entertained that some of these youths are showing a greater love for their athletic than for their theological exercises.

There has been a remarkable increase in the population, concomitant with the all-round pro-

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gress. The successful fight against disease and the lowering of the death-rate have resulted in the saving of a quarter of a million lives annually, and the annual excess of births over deaths is 400,000. In 1871 the population of Italy was 25,964,300, while the returns of the census of June 10, 1911, give the total as 35,959,077, an increase of 6·81 per cent. since the census of 1901, and this despite a loss of 500,000 a year through emigration. At this rate, in fifteen years the Italian population will exceed that of France. All the regions (the old *compartimenti*) show increases varying from 12·51 for Venetia to 2·07 per cent. for Umbria, except Basilicata and the Abruzzi, where emigration to America has reduced the population by 3·58 and 0·97 per cent. respectively. Chieti, Benevento, Caltanissetta, and Campobasso—all in the South—show slight decreases, while the other provincial capitals have gained during the period, the most noteworthy increases being those of Foggia 44 per cent., Catania 41·8, Bari 33·6, Grosseto 19·7, Naples 28·3, Turin 27·4, Syracuse 26·7, Udine 25·5. Naples heads the list of the thirteen larger cities of Italy with 709,376 inhabitants; then come Rome (616,790), Milan (602,093), Turin (418,666), Palermo (336,340), Genoa (265,082), and Florence (234,819).

## CHAPTER VIII

### ECONOMIC ITALY

IF the world received a severe shock when Italy declared war on Turkey, perhaps a still bigger shock followed when it was discovered that Italy had the money ready to pay for the war; that, instead of being the "poverty-stricken Italy" of tradition, she was actually taking front rank among the nations of the earth for financial soundness and commercial progress. But even when the fallaciousness of the old-fashioned theories about Italy's corruption and decay was demonstrated in black and white at the Turin Exhibition by her capable Minister of Commerce, the Hon. Francesco Nitti, there were actually a few people who did not hesitate to suggest that Italy's financial statements had been "cooked" in order to keep up her credit. The ex-Finance Minister, Luzzatti, who has been largely responsible for Italy's financial recovery, has adequately dealt with these unscrupulous critics. Yet there



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is really some excuse for the general surprise and incredulity : for the rapid progress which has been made in the last few years is marvellous.

Speaking at Oxford in 1909, on the occasion of the conferment upon him of an honorary doctor's degree, the Marquis di San Giuliano, the present Foreign Minister, who was at that time the Italian Ambassador, said : " When in 1861 the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed, an arduous task devolved upon the young State. Everything was to be done ; everything was wanting : schools, Army, Navy, railways, and ports. Provinces, divided through long centuries of history, had to be not only politically and administratively united, but also morally blended together. A whole people had to be educated to the right use of free institutions, so suddenly acquired ; all that other nations had done in the long sequence of centuries had to be accomplished in a few years. An enormous public debt, contracted during the wars of independence, a deficit in the revenue, and immense expenses, had to be faced in order to reach the same level as more advanced nations. The country was poor, her potential resources were not only undeveloped, but to some extent even unsuspected. It was essentially an agricultural



PROFESSOR FRANCESCO NITTI,  
Minister of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce.



LEONIDA BISSOLATI,  
The Socialist Leader.



country, and the methods of agriculture were conducted on purely traditional lines ; modern industry, so highly developed elsewhere, was in Italy almost entirely unknown."

Although the need for heroism and martyrdom is not so great nowadays, yet the remarkable upward fight which has been made in industry and agriculture shows that the Italian fibre has not become weakened or untrue to itself. San Giuliano is justified in his claim that no other nation having to face such obstacles has attained a corresponding progress ; and this claim does not rest upon mere assertion ; it is backed up by most convincing and surprising statistics, demonstrating Italy's industrial and commercial growth. The following brief statement shows the increase respectively in imports and exports :

|               | Imports.        | Exports.      |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
|               | Lire.           | Lire.         |
| In 1870 . . . | 895,717,683 .   | 756,276,905   |
| „ 1880 . . .  | 1,225,644,170 . | 1,132,289,192 |
| „ 1890 . . .  | 1,377,286,433 . | 962,600,353   |
| „ 1900 . . .  | 1,707,480,065 . | 1,354,799,753 |
| „ 1910 . . .  | 3,235,765,637 . | 2,056,391,221 |

The rise in the standard of living, consequent upon the increased wealth of the population, and the demand for raw materials brought about by the astonishing development of Italy as an in-

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dustrial nation, account for the marked difference between the imports and exports. The growth of Italy's international commerce, however, appears more marvellous when it is compared with the relative progress made by other nations—nations considerably more fortunate in facilities and advantages for commercial exchange. Reduced to a "single numerical statement," and fixing 100 as the index figure, the comparison in the growth of the imports and exports during the twenty years 1890-1910 was as follows :

| Imports.          |     | Exports.          |     |
|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| Italy . . .       | 243 | United States . . | 226 |
| Belgium . . .     | 237 | Italy . . .       | 224 |
| Germany . . .     | 207 | Germany . . .     | 224 |
| United States . . | 190 | Belgium . . .     | 204 |
| England . . .     | 162 | England . . .     | 165 |
| France . . .      | 152 | France . . .      | 161 |

The first Budget of United Italy, in 1862, showed a revenue of 480,000,000 lire, and an expenditure of 826,000,000 lire. The deficit, which the difference in these two figures represents, was enough to handicap, if not to cripple, any struggling nation. Of course, the greater part of Italy's financial energies was then taken up in developing the necessary defensive forces. A meagre 15,000,000 lire was all that was available

for education, and 22,000,000 lire for agriculture, industry, and commerce. Things did not improve much until after 1870, when the expenses of the war of 1866 had been practically cleared off, and the Government was enabled to lay the foundations of the present economic well-being. In 1875, thanks to the self-sacrifice, most willingly made, of the burdened taxpayers, the expenditure and revenue were made to balance for the first time. But this financial equilibrium was of only short duration. In 1881 there was a deficit of 53,000,000 lire, brought about by the abolition of the duty on the corn-grinding.

Italy then turned and faced squarely the crying need for the improvement of her internal condition as well as of her Army and Navy ; and she then commenced that most trying struggle, which went on quietly but vigorously, and from which she has just emerged to surprise the world. The revenue, which in 1862 was but 480,000,000 lire, had reached 2,224,000,000 lire for 1911-12, and instead of an expenditure double the revenue, there is now a surplus of 74,000,000 lire, leaving out of account the railways, which did not exist in 1862. On the one item of education, instead of 15,000,000 lire, as in 1862, the present expenditure is 103,000,000 lire, a point over-



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looked by those critics who have gone into the South to compare the provisions for education with those of Britain. There is no one more conscious of the country's shortcomings in the matter of public education than are the Government authorities. They only ask to be judged by fair standards, and for a due acknowledgment of their enormous task and of what they have already accomplished.

Looking over the figures of their financial development, the Italians have every reason to be proud, especially as the other great States of Europe have done nothing but increase their public debt. The effect that this financial success has had upon the Italians is well described by Thomas Okey and Bolton King: "The growth of national prosperity, and a careful system of public finance, at length permitted the long-desired conversion of the National Debt in 1906. The appreciation of the funds since 1900 has been steady and continuous; in 1905, the rendita reached at Rome the high-water mark of 106.59, and in the same year the exchange in London fell as low as 25.07 lire. Sonnino's warning cry of twenty years ago had its effect, when, during the two busy months of his Ministry, he was able, with Luzzatti's help, to mature a scheme which his

successors executed. The Bill, introduced by Majorana, Giolitti's Minister of the Treasury, at three o'clock in the afternoon of June 29, was at four referred to a committee, whose report their chairman, Luzzatti, read to the Chamber at 4.40. Having briefly traced the upward course of the national credit, from the time when Italian paper was exchangeable for gold, only at 20 per cent. discount, to its actual position when it was worth more than gold, he was about to resume his seat as an ordinary deputy, when the whole assembly rose and united in a stirring tribute of praise to the father of the Italian *risorgimento*. Political opponents fell upon each other's necks in tears; the Press and public galleries joined in the applause, which was renewed when the Bill, rapidly passing through all its stages, became law at eight o'clock. The conversion was a brilliant success. Of the net amount of Italian Consols, £327,640,000, subject to conversion, less than £150,000 was refunded, and the stock has ever since remained well over par. Italy is now the only country in Europe, save England and France, that can place 3 1/2 per cent. securities on the market at a premium, and the Banco d'Italia has won a high place among European banks of issue."

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The savings-banks are a sure indication of the progress or otherwise of a nation ; and certainly the Italian savings-banks are eloquent on the subject of progress. From 1876, the year in which the Post Office Savings Banks, the true index of popular prosperity, began to function, the increase has been as follows :

|                   | Lire.         |
|-------------------|---------------|
| In 1876 . . . . . | 2,443,403     |
| „ 1880 . . . . .  | 46,253,552    |
| „ 1885 . . . . .  | 163,889,213   |
| „ 1890 . . . . .  | 297,366,566   |
| „ 1895 . . . . .  | 462,459,985   |
| „ 1900 . . . . .  | 682,212,232   |
| „ 1905 . . . . .  | 1,068,521,243 |
| „ 1909 . . . . .  | 1,586,518,148 |

The co-operative movement constitutes one of the principal co-efficients in Italy's economic progress. The societies are divided into three categories : credit banks, production and labour, and consumers' societies. In December 1909, the popular banks numbered 368, with a capital of 73,025,960 lire, while the co-operative and rural banks numbered 297, with a capital of 34,743,311 lire. The fact that at the date mentioned, the interest bearing deposits in the popular banks amounted to 243,389,490 lire, and the ordinary deposits to 409,866,128 lire, while the

respective figures for the co-operative banks were 120,080,223 lire and 269,585,539 lire, is sufficient proof of the faith the public has in these institutions. The co-operative productive and labour societies numbered 547, and in the year 1909 had undertaken contracts of the value of 13,500,000 lire. Italy's emigration has by no means been a dead loss to her. It is estimated that there are 5,500,000 Italians in foreign countries, and these send a considerable amount of their savings to the "old folks at home." In a normal year something like 180,000,000 lire are sent through the Bank of Naples and international postal orders. It is difficult to estimate the remittances sent in registered letters, foreign money, and bills of exchange, but a very careful study made by the Commissariat of Emigration estimates the approximate amount sent home to the Fatherland at not less than 500,000,000 lire a year.

The industrial development of Italy is the more surprising because she lacks the minerals which are essential to manufactures. Without coal and ores, it was never dreamed possible that Italy would enter the industrial market. She was even without wood to raise steam, owing to the denudation of her forests, but with

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the development of electric science her eyes were opened to the power stored up in her mountain torrents. It is a characteristic of the Italians, of which the conduct of the present war has furnished the latest illustrations, that the conception of an idea and the putting of it into practice are almost simultaneous with them. They do not wait to see what other people make of it ; they set to work themselves. Thus it was that Italy took the lead in the production of "white coal," as Professor Nitti termed her water-power, and the varied extent to which she has applied it is a revelation. The British Association has acknowledged her superiority in the domain of hydro-electricity, and her power plants have formed a model for the whole world. When the Americans desired to harness the Niagara, they had to come to Milan for their turbines. One of the most wonderful of these plants is that at the Tosa Falls in the Val Formazza, where the enormous mass of water under control produces over 60,000 horse power. In 1910 no less than 762,999 horse power was being generated by hydro-electricity. The State pays an annual coal bill abroad of over 150,000,000 lire, and quite naturally the electrification of railways is being proceeded

with, as fast and as far as the mountain torrents can be put under tribute. Silvanus Thompson, in recording his respect for the enterprise of the Italian electrical engineers, says they have struck out lines of their own instead of slavishly copying other nations, and have shown great courage, and ability in tackling the problems with which they were confronted.

While in 1860 most progressive nations had good railway systems, there were in Italy barely 1,800 kilometres of railways: and these were principally in Piedmont, for the very good reason that the Vatican frowned on such new-fangled notions and discouraged their development farther South. There are now 16,989 kilometres, besides about 5,000 kilometres of light steam railways and electric tramways. Linking up with these track systems there have been established during the past few years many private automobile lines with concessions from the Government. Up to two years ago there were sixty-two of these subsidiary lines in operation over roads aggregating 2,944 kilometres. This new means of public transportation promises rapid development, and should prove of considerable educational and industrial benefit to the country, bringing inaccessible towns and villages in the rural and mountainous districts



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into touch with the active life of the larger centres. Of the marine service, too, there has been a remarkable development, Italy possessing lines of first-class passenger-boats, and a large fleet of merchantmen. Shipbuilding is in a flourishing condition. For some time past, Genoa has surpassed Marseilles, although at present she cannot develop as fast as she might because there is not sufficient railway rolling-stock. Since the opening of the Simplon Tunnel there have been frequent deadlocks through congestion of traffic, but the authorities are dealing with the situation as quickly as they can, and Genoa will very soon become not only the greatest port in the Mediterranean, but one of the most important ports in the world.

Contrary to the common idea, Italy does produce other minerals besides sulphur, which, of course, is her chief extracting industry; and while the total value of these minerals in 1909 was 42,000,000 lire, in 1910 it had risen to 80,000,000 lire. Besides sulphur the products were iron, brass, zinc, mercury, iron pyrites, petroleum, bituminous rock, etc. The manufacture of sulphuric acid has gone up from 75,000 quintals in 1865 to 5,897,120 quintals in 1909.

With the improvement in industry came in-

evitably a rise in wages, and the standard of life among Italian workmen to-day is far higher than it was twenty years ago. And with the opening up of the country places by road and rail there has been a corresponding improvement in the living of the agricultural peasant, hard as his lot still is. It is true that during recent years there have been many strikes, which manifest the discontent of the working-classes, but to those who can take a philosophic view of such occurrences they are only a sign of health. There are no strikes where the population has had the life ground out of it by bad government or bad management ; strikes show that the working-classes have reached that stage when they can appreciate and demand a higher standard of living. There are no strikes in backward countries, or during industrial depression, for obvious reasons. The lively times they have had in the North of Italy during the last ten years are the surest indications of industrial progress. The organisation of labour has improved the condition of labour all round, and has had its due effect upon social legislation.

As the Foreign Minister has pointed out : "the war has furnished a pretext on the part of the foreign Press to publish statements ab-

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solutely destitute of any basis of truth concerning the precarious condition which would result in our commerce and the injury to our credit." A sufficient reply to these statements is given by the following comparisons :

September 27 (before the ultimatum).

| Italian rendita. |        |                 |         | Exchange. |         |         |
|------------------|--------|-----------------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Rome.            | Paris. | London.         | Berlin. | Paris.    | London. | Berlin. |
| 101'17           | 100'30 | 99<br>(Oct. 3)  | —       | 100'97    | 25'42   | 124'05  |
| 101'60           | 100'30 | 99<br>(Nov. 21) | —       | 101'25    | 25'47   | 124'27  |
| 101'90           | 191'25 | 100             | 101     | 100'50    | 25'34   | 123'00  |

Neither the commerce nor the credit of Italy has suffered from the fact of her war with Turkey. The sum total of exports during October shows, for instance, an actual increase of nearly 1,000,000 lire over the total for October 1910. For the most part this increase is furnished by an increased sale of fruit, fresh and preserved, and of raw silks. But there is also a marked increase in the export of manufactured goods, notably of automobiles. The imports, on the other hand, have slightly fallen off, showing a decrease of some 400,000 lire during October as against that month in 1910. But

this decrease is principally owing to the diminution in the import of grain, which is itself due to the fact that the recent harvest in Italy was a particularly good one. The import of coal and raw stuffs for manufacture, an unmistakable sign of industrial progress, shows a considerable increase.

The revival in Italian agriculture is perhaps more astonishing than the growth of industry. The miserably backward state of affairs had become a byword amongst the nations, and explains somewhat the ridicule poured out upon the Italians, especially by the French writers, when King Victor Emmanuel proposed to establish the International Institute of Agriculture. For Italy to give herself airs on agricultural matters showed, they thought, to say the least, a lack of modesty. But then these outsiders did not know of the internal transformation which had been taking place; and the great success of the International Institute has compelled them to eat their words. Gone are the wooden ploughs and pre-Adamite implements, and the latest machinery is owned and employed co-operatively. Where there were no roads, and cultivation languished because of lack of marketing facilities, there are well-constructed highways, with automobile traffic linking

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up with the railways, upon which easy freightage rates have been secured by co-operative action.

Consider for a moment the disadvantages under which Italian agriculture laboured. To begin with, so much of the country is mountainous, estimated at one-third of the total area, while one-tenth of it is barren rock, and so many of the plains are merely marshes. The ruthless cutting down of timber, consequent upon wars and the niggardly policy of the landowners, not only denuded the hills, but rendered the lowlands arid. With no forests to hold the water, in summer the land below is parched, and in winter washed and gashed by uncontrollable torrents, and frequently flooded for hundreds of square miles. Add to this the fearful scourge of malaria, which makes so much territory almost uninhabitable, and a faint idea may be gathered of what the Italian agricultural reformer found himself "up against." But to-day, of 1,200,000 hectares of uncultivated land, which a few years ago were considered possible for reclamation, more than half are bearing fruits and crops. In this work of reclamation alone, between 1862 and 1910, no less than 225,000,000 lire have been expended, and for the remainder of the work there are at present expenditures authorised of another

205,000,000 lire. "The accumulated labour of industrious generations has made mountain side and sandy plain smile with fertility. The patient Italian has built up the terraces of the Riviera, and set them thick with olive and vine; the lemon-gardens by the Sorrento coast are literally made by hand out of a bare limestone cliff; over three million acres have been laboriously irrigated, and the 'marcite' of Lombardy, of no great natural fertility, bear six to nine tons of hay to the acre." Indeed, the first glimpse of Italian land cultivation should be sufficient to dispel all the superstitions which some people seem to have been at great pains to instil into one's mind about the downright laziness of the Italians. The *dolce far niente* tradition is an outrageous libel on one of the most painstaking and industrious peoples in the world.

How well the wooden plough has been consigned to oblivion is demonstrated by the following figures of the importation of agricultural machinery:

| Value of Machinery Imported. |   |   |   |   |            |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|------------|
| Lire.                        |   |   |   |   |            |
| 1905                         | . | . | . | . | 6,574,000  |
| 1906                         | . | . | . | . | 3,199,600  |
| 1907                         | . | . | . | . | 12,186,580 |
| 1908                         | . | . | . | . | 12,542,660 |
| 1909                         | . | . | . | . | 14,709,890 |
| 1910                         | . | . | . | . | 15,083,520 |



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In the first few years after the unity of Italy there were scarcely a few hundred quintals of chemical manures manufactured. In 1909 there were manufactured in Italy 9,500,000 quintals of hyperphosphates, to the value of 52,500,000 lire. Indeed, the manufacture of artificial manures is a considerable industry, there being 120 factories employing over 5,000 workmen.

Ten years ago the idea of reafforestation was somewhat of a novelty to the Italians; but science brought home to them an understanding of the economic loss to the country through the lack of forests. And what forests had escaped the axe were in a shocking state of neglect. Wood is used practically exclusively as fuel for the winter warming of the houses; and as it has to be exported from Austria, fabulous prices are charged for it: the poor simply have to go without. But in the last five years the Government has taken the matter thoroughly in hand. A rigorous vigilance has been established over the precious forests which stand, and considerable sums, which are to be augmented, are being devoted directly to reafforestation, nurseries having been established which distribute annually twenty million young trees, while tons of seeds are given away to peasant proprietors.

Italy's extensive wine-growing dates from 1888, when, taking advantage of the failure, through the pest, of the French vine-crop, she devoted herself enthusiastically to the business. Indeed, there was something like a craze, and every available nook and cranny was planted with vines. The recovery in France, and the entry of Spain and middle Europe territories into the wine-growing market, caused a reaction ; but despite her primitive methods, and lack of barrels and cellars, Italy held on ; and she is gradually removing the stigma that her wines will not " keep " by taking strict measures against adulteration, and giving careful study to the question of preservation. There is no reason why she should not continue to develop this industry, and produce a bigger variety of good brands like her Chianti, Marsala, Asti, etc. Much land in the South, which was previously used for olives and vegetable-growing, has been turned over to the vine.

Olive-oil, of course, is another of Italy's great industries, a fifth part of the yearly production being exported. The olive-trees unfortunately are liable to the fly pest. There are no less than 19,000 oil-presses, employing 75,000 work-people. Mulberry-tree culture has developed

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enormously, and, as is well known, Lyons has long been surpassed by Italy for the production of silk. Italian scientists have contributed a great deal to the successful cultivation of cocoons, in which industry there are nearly 200 establishments. "Eugenics" have been very successful among the silk-worms, the crossing of the old stocks with Japanese and Chinese worms having worked wonders. It is hoped that before long, Italy will be absolutely independent of other countries for her supply of silk-worms, and with the new colony coming to her aid this seems certain.

Italy now ranks as one of the main rice-exporting countries, so rapidly has this branch of agriculture been developed, while as for tobacco, the statistics show that in 1908 something like 140,000,000 plants were "raised." In fruit growing keen competition from California has now to be met, but here again growth is the report. It is interesting to note that in 1907 Italy received no less than 29,852,230 lire for almonds alone—the best almonds in the world—and 11,456,885 lire for hazel-nuts and other kinds of nuts. Dairy-farming has been taken up most enthusiastically during the past fifteen years, and in this respect co-operative methods have worked

wonders, so that a considerable export trade is done. Italian chickens and eggs have quite a reputation. Cattle, sheep, and horse breeding have been developed, largely on the lines of British societies for improving stock : and in spite of this there has been a considerable rise in imports in this respect. This, of course, is direct evidence of the raised standard of living : for meat foods were until a few years ago almost unknown among millions of the population. There is a vigorous movement on foot to capture for home producers this market, and additional strength is expected from the cattle-raising country of Cyrenaica.

The co-operative principle is largely responsible for the revival of Italian agriculture. The Popular Banks began in the towns, and were of the Schulze-Delitzsch type, adapted to the special conditions of Italy by Luigi Luzzatti. They encouraged agriculture, and have continued to do so, although the rural banks have taken up most of the work. They are essentially organs of credit for the great average trading, industrial, and agricultural middle class. The rural banks follow the Raffeison system. A large number of them are Catholic, being an outcome of the Catholic Social Movement.

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They have for their principal object the provision of capital to the peasants. They have no initial capital, but they receive savings and deposits ; and only when these are insufficient do they borrow the necessary capital from the Popular Banks. In 1886 there were 24 of these banks ; in 1906 the number had risen to 1,451. The estimated number now is nearly 2,000. Quite distinct from these are the agricultural banks which have arisen in Southern Italy and Sicily as the result of legislation allowing the Banks of Naples and Sicily to transact agricultural business with intermediary institutions. In 1909 these banks numbered 1,542.

Co-operative societies are also being founded for the collective purchase of requirements, to protect the farmers from exorbitant prices and inferior qualities. At present they are chiefly concerned with agricultural machines and chemical manures. Co-operation in production is applied in many ways in Italy : in the manufacture of butter and cheese, in making wine, in treating the lees of wine to obtain alcohol, extracting oil from olives, and extracting their essences from citrous fruits ; further, in the desiccation and preservation of cocoons, in the preparation and sale of preserves, fresh fruits,

and vegetables, in the accumulation of flowers for the extraction and sale of their essences, as is done in the Maritime Alps. The co-operative dairies, however, had their origin in the mountains in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The co-operative societies for the manufacture of chemical manures are fast gaining greater importance. They were started in order to check the excessive demands of the private manufacturer, and to lower the prices, and so far they have achieved considerable success. Stock-breeding societies are now growing rapidly.

Collective farming is spreading in the South, as it is possible to obtain land from the owner more cheaply, and thus eliminate the middleman, who is responsible for increasing the rents. The Catholics have many of these collective farms, but the largest group is that of the Federation of Agricultural Societies, in the province of Trapani, a Socialist organisation, and the system is having great success. It is putting an end to the agricultural strikes which have so often been very near civil war. "For the Socialists these collective farms are meant to complete the action of resistance, of which the leagues are the pivot, and to become the means by which the agricultural proletariat may rise from



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the position of wage-earners, or small metayers or tenants, to that of being their own masters ; and this not as isolated individuals, but as members of a class. The aim is to emancipate the class, delivering it from the useless intermediary, who, to increase his gain, naturally makes his oppression most felt where there is least resistance ; it is on the class they desire to confer the benefits of progress that only a collective organisation can realise. With this end in view it is not intended so much to form different little farms associated only by the fact of hiring lands in common, to be cultivated afterwards separately, as to start one single great enterprise, of which the members will receive their pay from the society, that is to say, from themselves, and will divide amongst themselves the eventual profits of their common undertaking."

In the domain of agriculture the establishment in Italy of what may be termed the "Green International" has been an epoch-marking event, which, simply for the reason that it happened in Italy, has not been sufficiently appreciated in the world's Press. Nobody knows better than the farmer himself that it is not only necessary to produce well, but also to sell well ; and nobody

knows better than he that the price of his corn is fixed hard and fast by the world price. Hence he puzzles his poll over the agricultural "intelligence" in his newspaper, and endeavours to work out from the reports of growing crops, as near as may be, what price he can expect for his own products. But the "dubious outlook," the "probable deficiency," "indifferent," "short," "promising," "middling" reports only tend to obfuscate him the further, and he is still left guessing. His ignorance of the general condition of the crops of the world affords golden opportunities for the unscrupulous speculator, who can often spread or confirm at will false rumours artificially causing a rise or fall in prices, as may suit his own interests. The notorious Mr. Patten's exploits were only possible because he controlled the supply of information. The operations of the Bulls and the Bears in the Wheat Pit decide the farmer's destiny.

It is here that the Green International comes in. Five years ago, one David Lubin, an American, who had learned his lessons farming in California, conceived the idea of an international crop-reporting bureau, to be supported by all the nations of the earth, and thus beyond the corruption and the bribery of the "big business"

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interests. It was truly an inspiration, and so possessed by it did Mr. Lubin become that he gave up his farming in order to go out and persuade the nations to take up his scheme. He went all over Europe trying to interest Ministers and Ambassadors. But, although they acknowledged that it was all very interesting and so much to be desired, they looked upon Mr. Lubin as a Utopian who somehow did not understand how really wicked the world was. But the man from California persevered, and eventually gained the sympathetic ear of Italy's democratic King, Victor Emmanuel.

No country has suffered more than Italy from the terrible consequences of panics and high prices, and the King encouraged Mr. Lubin to propound his panacea. In brief, the scheme was to establish an International Institute of Agriculture, whose main object should be to issue, without comment, prompt and regular information regarding the various factors which influence the prices of agricultural products, to render thereby more and more difficult the speculation which, without profiting the consumer, obtains at the cost of the producer. While resisting the influence of organisations which, by means of inaccurate information, artificially cause the sudden rise and

fall of prices in the principal markets of the world, it should indicate how to sell and how to buy, by promptly communicating, at fixed and frequent intervals, to those who are interested, reports concerning the growing crops throughout the world, the stocks in store and circulation, and the probable demand.

His Majesty was delighted with the idea, and, as an earnest of his enthusiasm, promptly gave Mr. Lubin a cheque for £12,000 towards the foundation of the Institute, and offered to pay the running expenses. It was decided that the Eternal City should house the Institute, and to-day this new building, standing in the charming Borghese Gardens, is the permanent home of a World Parliament. In the Senate House are gathered the representatives of fifty nations. We see the Russian and the Japanese, the Italian and the Austrian, the American and the Chinese, all working together with one common object. Here the talk is not of treaties, of the ethics of Dum-dum bullets and floating mines, but of bread and clothing for the peoples of every land, and how to protect them from the Pattens and other gamblers with the people's food.

For years it has been generally agreed among authorities that if a "Single Numerical State-

ment" of the world's growing crops could be compiled it would be an epoch-marking achievement. Signor Umberto Ricci, of the Institute, has marked that epoch with a Single Numerical Statement that shows at a glance and in a single figure the state of the world's growing crop at the time of publication. It is so simple that the dullest peasant can understand it, and it ranks as one of the greatest triumphs in statistics. And with the publication of the first Statement, even although it was founded upon the returns of only half a dozen countries, objections fell to the ground wholesale, and the sceptical countries were converted. Those nations which have not proper reporting facilities are establishing special Agriculture Departments to deal with the matter, and already the Institute is able to issue a Statement that for accuracy is far beyond anything accomplished before by private monopolies at a colossal expenditure of money. As often as not the information published by the private institutions is deliberately misleading. It has paid the speculator to poison the well of truth, and the buying up of the newspapers and bribery of the agricultural correspondents of the newspapers is only part of the game. Without the aid and unity of the nations the Institute was impossible.

but now, with only a few minor States, such as Siam and Bolivia, standing outside, the success of the Institute and its work is assured. Henceforward the Single Numerical Statement will be the real guide to the farmers of the whole world in the formation of the prices of their products. What its influence will be upon protective tariffs and other disturbing factors of the world's peace remains to be seen, but it is bound to have a far-reaching effect.

But what must also be of interest to agricultural reformers is the service the Institute is now rendering the world in developing agricultural co-operative banking. While the official Government crop-reporting system of the Institute is to be a factor in determining the world's price of the farmer's product, co-operative banking is to enable him to exercise control over his labours in accordance with the trend of modern economic developments. The one is complementary to the other. Upon this question the contributions of the Institute have already attained magnificent proportions, and the British Government in particular is said to attach much importance to this branch of its work.



## CHAPTER IX

### INTELLECTUAL ITALY

**D**URING the last ten years Italian culture has shown a truly marvellous impetus, and evinces some special characteristics that render it peculiarly interesting. A new generation of young men has sprung up who have brought a potent breath of new life into the domains of literature, art, religion, philosophy, and social action ; and it will be found that, in spite of many differences and even contradictions, they are all animated by the same spirit, they are all characterised by a fine breadth of view and a corresponding tendency towards synthesis.

Writers, philosophers, artists, no longer form little hermetically closed camps, strangers to one another and the world. These intellectual workers have felt the need to come into contact with modern life, and the contact has awakened in them doubts and problems compelling them to think. Thus it happened that at the same

epoch a strong group of young men of unusual ability began to occupy themselves with religious and philosophical problems. Bergson was well known and appreciated in Italy, while he was as yet little known in France, and not at all in England. William James was translated and widely read in Italy, while in France and Germany he was known only to specialists. And it is not surprising that a new moral tone is pervading all intellectual departments. The younger generation comprehends that the ultimate scope of all culture is ethical, and endeavours to demonstrate this practically as well as theoretically. Hence many studious young men are dedicating themselves to social work as the inevitable outcome of their serious philosophical study.

One school may be said to be led by the philosopher Benedetto Croce, a cool and somewhat negative spirit, who, together with his followers, attaches great importance to criticism and analysis, and has little sympathy with the other schools of young ardent poets inspired by d'Annunzio, but not imitators of that poet—men who turn towards life and movement, and whose distinguishing note is a buoyant hopefulness and confidence in their own and their country's future.

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Around the former school are naturally gathered the philosophers, and their idealistic wing has its headquarters in Florence and Naples. Giovanni Papini and Giuseppe Prezzolini, in their weekly *Leonardo*, combated the Positivist and Academic school with asperity and even exaggeration, but helped to diffuse knowledge of important movements. *Leonardo* is now defunct, but a more ambitious project is *Psiche*, edited by Roberto Assagioli. Meanwhile Prezzolini is continuing his own side of the campaign in his weekly *La Voce*, but has moved his ground on to social and political questions, and his endeavour now is to awaken the moral conscience of the nation and to purify the national life. With him there now works the historian and independent Socialist, Gaetano Salvemini, who is conducting an active campaign for the redemption of the South. Further, in Florence there exists an active and genial centre of culture in the shape of the Biblioteca Filosofica, where lectures are held, and from whence periodicals and books bearing on intellectual movements are sent all over the country.

Benedetto Croce is certainly the biggest name in contemporary thought. He has elaborated a vast ideological system that derives from the

absolute idealism of Hegel, but which nevertheless bears the stamp of his own originality. His aesthetic studies, recently published in English, have made him known to English readers, who would (or could) not have read his *magnum opus* in the original. Together with Giovanni Gentile, who is professor of the University of Palermo, and there directs a Biblioteca Filosofica which has identical aims with that of Florence, Croce edits a monthly review, *La Critica*, which treats of literature from a severely historical and elevated point of view.

The recently revived interest in religious studies in Italy is due above all to the Modernists. Much has been done in Milan by Alessandro Casati and Tommaso Gallarati Scotti with their excellent review, *Il Rinnovamento*, and at Florence by Salvatore Minocchi, who abandoned his priestly cassock rather than bend before the exigencies of the Vatican. Romolo Murri too, after long internal struggles, felt constrained to abandon the priesthood in order to dedicate himself freely to social and political work, and now sits as deputy in the Italian Parliament. As regards historical studies, the work of Guglielmo Ferrero stands easily first among the younger men.

Modern Italian novelists are still too much domi-

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nated by d'Annunzio's overpowering influence, which makes them tend to dwell too exclusively on the seamy side of life. There are, however, signs of a healthy reaction towards what might be defined as a middle-class standard of morals, producing books less reverberate in sound, less rhetorical and brilliant in style, but wholesomer and truer to life and to life's intimate problems. Of this, "Fiabe Della Virtù" of Alfredo Panzini may be regarded as a symptom and an example. However, it is pretty certain that the Italian genius runs more to short tales than to works *à longue haleine*, to poetry and to plays than to novels—in short, the exact opposite of what happens in England and the United States. Grazia Deledda continues to write her Sardinian tales, and she has of late distinguished herself as well for her poems inspired by a vigorous patriotic emotion. Giuseppe Brunati has met with success in his "L'Oriente Veneziano" and "Quaresimale." Clerice Tartufari's "Il Miracolo" and "Leggi Eterne" are able psychological and ethical studies. Antonio Beltramelli has preserved the fiery, rude character of his native Romagna in novels written in a somewhat original style.

It would never occur to an Italian if he wanted

to deal with some psychological or social problem to do so in fiction form. Foggazzaro, who dealt with Modernism in that form, was the exception that proves the rule, but then his inspirations were not typically Italian. Your true Italian would either turn to poetry or discuss his subject in minute and searching detail in a tome devoted wholly to it and devoid of love frills or social fringes. The Italian's native impulse is towards the oldest and youngest form of art, that of the lyric. He breaks into verse as spontaneously as a bird breaks into song.

And here we enter the domain where we are faced with an *embarras de richesse* where choice and encomium become difficult. However, two main currents may be made out plainly. One may be described as the school of twilight, the other that of dawn. The former celebrates the minute, the weak, the perishing, the petty things of life and nature ; its lyre is tuned to a languid pessimism, a vapid scepticism ; its work resembles filigree—pretty, graceful, but not solid or made to survive wear and tear. It is permeated by a hothouse, rather than an outdoor, air. The head of this school is Guido Gozzano of Turin, whose last work, called " I Colloqui," is eminently characteristic of his merits and defects.



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Unquestionably he has a large following. Opposed to this decadent stands a vigorous and keenly vital group of young poets who by word and deed affirm poetry in Italy is not dead, but as living and as significant and influential as of yore. Their organ is *L' Vivica*, a monthly magazine. In verses that palpitate with youthful verve and faith, they glorify life in all its multifarious aspects, they worship a poetic ideal that embraces Humanity, Nature, and above all, the Fatherland. Further, in lieu of writing in such a manner that, but for the division of the lines by the printer, the matter might be prose, à la Walt Whitman, they have returned to the old Italian metres, to simplicity, to lucidity of style and thought, resolved to preserve the best of Italian traditions free from foreign influences. For the keynote that distinguishes them all and unites them is their fervent patriotism. Of this, d'Annunzio has just given an example, whom else we might not name, as he belongs to an older generation. But, with the uprising of patriotism that swept like a flood over the Peninsula on the outbreak of the war against Turkey, the traditional foe of Italy, d'Annunzio seemed to have renewed his youth and, in a series of odes entitled "*Canzoni per le geste d'Oltremare*," proved himself the

bard, the veritable Tyrtaeus of this refinding of the national soul. On their appearance in the *Corriere della Sera* they were insistently clamoured for in the theatres, and the actors had to recite them to the acclamation of frantically excited audiences. Another elder poet whom the Tripoli campaign has furnished with youthful inspiration and ardour is Giovanni Pascoli, whose commemoration of the dead and wounded, under the title of "La Grande Proletarian si è Mossa," is a splendid piece of prose-poetry.

But to return to the younger men, mention must be made of Francesco Chiesa, a revolutionary and mystic spirit who in a chain of robust incisive sonnets has celebrated the glories of the Italian mediæval cathedral, around which there pulsed in the Middle Ages the greater part of civil life. Pietro Mastri is a follower of Pascoli, and expresses, like his master, the gentle Virgilian feeling for country life, as he shows in his chief volume "L'Arcobaleno"; and a sincere devotion to nature also inspires the exalted verses of Giovanni Bertachi. Mario Chini, too, has this delicate sympathy, as he proves in his "Il Ragno," where the influence of Mistral makes itself felt. Further, there are Sebastiano Satta, the poet of Sardinia, whose wild character he exalts; Giorgini

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Conti, the graceful, with his "Convegno dei Cipressi"; Ettore Cozzani, the singer of the sea; Federico Tozzi, with his historic vision; Domenico Tumiatì, with his "Poemi Lirici," and his play *La Giovane Italia*, which furnishes an admirable example of an historical play rich in lyrical interludes.

Two of the younger school have made real new departures, Eugenio Coselschi and Ferdinando Paolieri. The former, a very young man, has already to his record an "Inno al Sole" that is one long affirmation of his love for the Cosmos, his thoroughgoing Pantheism. Coselschi promises an epic that will embrace certainly three volumes, in which he intends to describe and exalt the recent glorious national revival. Francesco Paolieri also prefers the epic form. His "Venere Agresti" is a vigorous, wholesome glorification of the life of the farm and the fields. Its images, its prevailing character, its metaphors, smell of the soil. Of women singers, too, there is no lack. Eminent among the youngest are Maria Stella and Amalia Guglielminetti, whose virile agility of expression, conjoined to a sensual note and a proud dignity and force, has caused Borgese to salute her as "Sappho redivivus."

Special mention must be made of the dialect

poetry, which of recent years has seen a notable revival; for it must ever be remembered that, while Tuscan is the official Italian language, the dialects of the various regions are still persistent, and their use is by no means confined to the illiterate: for, unless strangers are present, they are spoken in the family circle, in the streets and mart. Thus, for example, Milanese, Genoese, Piedmontese, Neapolitan, are real languages, with a literature and a syntax their own. Among the Roman dialect poets Cesare Pascarella takes the first place. In sonnet form he furnishes us with exquisite miniatures of popular Roman life. Inimitably witty is his account put into the mouth of a man of the people, of Columbus's discovery of America, in which old and new ideas are mixed up in the most glorious confusion, and which at the same time is an exaltation of Italian genius. "A man of any other nation sees a dead frog, and that is all there is to it. Your Italian sees it and discovers electricity," and so on. Trilussa's poetry is different in character. He notes the *fatti diversi* of the day and puts them forward in the shape of dialogues, comic scenes, pungent satires of society and contemporary manners. A master in Neapolitan dialect is Salvatore di Giacomo, a really great poet, who

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reflects the noble vivacity of his fellow townsmen, the beauty of the bay and landscape. Many of the most famous and popular of the Piedigrotta songs are due to his graceful fancy. Roberto Bracco, the playwright, has also used his native Neapolitan dialect to put forward some of his vivid pictures of the popular soul, while Ferdinando Russo is a veritable artist, making the populace live before us in their own speech. In the dialect of Bologna, perhaps the harshest and most difficult, Alfredo Testoni has earned a merited fame by his "Sonetti della Signora Cattareina," where in Bolognese, a trifle diluted with real Italian, he lets his protagonist, an old-clothes woman, week by week, "gossip" to her heart's content about the doings of the larger world. These sonnets are often exquisitely comic, and yet not devoid of true poetic feeling. Berto Barbarani has had recourse to his native Veronese to enable him to express certain delicacies of sentiment and grace to which the more literary speech does not lend itself.

There is perhaps no country, not even Germany, where so much writing is put out by the printing-press as in Italy, "writing" which, without literary pretence, is often respectable in merit and shows above all the keen mental activity of

the Italians. This is partly due to the fact that printing is cheap, and partly that the Italian runs easily into elegant verbal expression of his rapidly conceived and redundant thoughts. This tendency also leads to the issue of countless small newspapers, small reviews, devoted to the discussion of some passing theme, some ardent polemic; and although their life term is brief, yet in their pages are not infrequently to be found hidden grains of gold. How all these reviewlets and newspaperlets manage to live is a marvel, even allowing for the Italians' marked predilection for newspaper reading. The tone of the newspaper Press, be it noted, is high—the Yellow Press has not yet found adherents here—the standard of writing is good, the information accurate. Italian newspapers can boast of not a few literary geniuses on their staffs, such as the brilliant Luigi Barzini, correspondent of the *Corriere della Sera*, Giuseppe Bevione of the *Stampa*, Corrado Zoli of the *Secolo*. Among literary and dramatic critics, Dino Mantovani and Domenico Oliva stand out as men whose writings are read and re-read and hotly discussed throughout Italy. It is symptomatic of the revival of Nationalism that the Authors' Society of Rome has offered a prize for the



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best work in verse or prose reflecting the new spirit.

In pictorial art there has been much activity—indeed too much, for one wonders what becomes of the yards and yards of coloured canvas. The new spirit as yet seems hardly to have touched painting. The younger men are still over-weighted by the memories of Italy's glorious past, or are under the spell of foreign artists whose works they see at the International Exhibitions of Venice and elsewhere. After each such exhibition the art therein dominant finds its echo among the younger men—Spanish impetuosity, German slapdash, Swedish mistiness, or whatever other pose is in vogue. Also the younger generation, here as elsewhere, study light effects and cognate problems, thereby causing the physiognomy of pictorial art to diverge too much from its proper sphere, becoming an optic rather than an intellectual expression. Impressionism, divisionism, pointism, and all the other 'isms have their adherents, but a true and vigorous national art, sprung from the best Italian traditions, in which a modern trend shows itself, still awaits its exponent. The only new note is a marked inclination towards landscape, which was less the forte of the older masters, and a pre-

dilection for portraiture, with an attempt to give psychological readings of the sitter's character. Of course this bias towards portraiture may be in part due to the fact that it is easier in this line to get commissions. Beyond question the strongest of these portrait-painters is Giacomo Balla, a Piedmontese resident in Rome, whose merits have not been sufficiently brought before the public, owing in part to the envy of his less able rivals and his own retiring modesty. Older, but young in the manifestations of his art, is Antonio Mancini, the Sicilian who permits himself certain audacities of technique that rebel against all tradition and convention. A solitary who endeavours to follow the ideals expressed in William Morris's "House of Art" is Adolfo de Carolis—a little monotonous in his types, but a graceful artist and an admirable designer. His pupil, Armando Spadini, is stronger and more varied, an acute observer of human types, and an impetuous and fluid colourist. Agreeable portrait-painters are Carlo Siviero of Naples and Manlio Martinelli the Tuscan.

The geographical divisions in Italian art show no signs of disappearing—rather they are accentuated at the various exhibitions, where separate rooms are often assigned to the various provinces.

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Venice during the last thirty years has seen a notable revival of her own best traditions, and the Venetian landscapists, above all, have distinguished themselves for their brilliant and lovely colouring, their elegance of touch, their subtilty of tone, reflecting the soul and character of their lagoons. A high place belongs to the Ciardi family, landscapists and seascapists, and high praise is above all due to Emma Ciardi for her exquisite garden studies, to which she knows how to impart a rococo grace. Marius Pictor, with his macabre fantasies and his moonlight effects, though a Bolognese, must be classed among the Venetians; and so must Cesare Laurenti, who represents the psychological trend of modern Italian painting, with a manifest inclination towards symbolism.

The Lombard painters are more sober in colouring, as is natural, seeing the difference in the environment, but perchance also more solid in substance. They have all more or less been influenced by that restless spirit of fervid fantasy, Gaetano Previati, whose experiments in technique led him at last into divisionism, by which means he hoped to attain to a new idealism in art. His followers have been many, and above all he has had followers in his attempts to bring social

problems upon the canvas, which is also one of the prominent characteristics of the younger Italian school. Among the youngest Lombard painters perhaps the most promising are Pietro Chiesa, Carlo Cazzaniga, and Emilo Pasini, though it is almost invidious to specialise, for so many show taste and ability. The hall-mark of Piedmont, as might be expected, is a serious severity. Landscape attracts them largely, but among the very youngest men none have as yet risen above the average. The Tuscans maintain their artistic traditions in so far that they are in the forefront of progress following all the various and most modern manifestations of art. They are strong in landscape, wherein, curiously enough, they all manifest the same inspiration, the same scheme of colouring, and evince a distinction of touch and a delicacy of treatment that make their pictures easily recognisable. Their most original painter is no longer young in years, although juvenile in method and thought—Plinio Nomellini, the most vivacious champion of artistic modernism. Antonio de Witt is an able landscapist who endeavours to express in his scenery the thoughts of the poet Pascoli. Good, too, are Augusto Bastianini, Mosé Lanzi, Mario Pensa, and Alberto Zardo, the latter employing pastel as his medium. As figure-

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painters Salvino Tofanari, Oscar Ghiglia, Manlio Martinelli, Ezio Marzi, and Ernestina Orlandini deserve mention. Genre painting is also cultivated by the Tuscans, but degenerates too easily into commercial art, for which unfortunately there is a ready market in Florence, or wherever the tourist gathers.

The Emilia boasts among others Luigi Bompard, modern in aim and technique ; Nicola Laurenti, a virile pastellist ; and Augusto Mussini, a restless spirit, who, after striving to find his vocation in art, mysteriously disappeared for some years, to be rediscovered in a monk's frock, exercising his talents upon frescoes for his convent church. Modern Neapolitan and South Italian art has a marked character of its own, consisting in vivacity of colour, of action, of imagination. The most promising younger Neapolitan talents are represented by three women, Angela Caraguti, Assunta Avitabile, with excellent nudes, and Celeste Cacace, with her portraits. There are also many clever artists among the men, but none of overwhelming talent.

Italy has only recently distinguished herself in the domain of etching, colour-printing, lithography and other graphic and photo-mechanic arts, encouraged by the International Exhibitions

held in Venice and Rome of black and white, and the demand for illustrations and other branches of commercial art. In coloured etching Francesco Vitalini, who perished miserably in the Alps, turned out some spirited specimens; while Cesare Bisio walks worthily in the footsteps of Piranesi. In poster art, Italy, though she came late into the field, has achieved some notable successes. Here her poetic imagination, her synthetic tendency, and her capacity of seizing the salient moment, have stood her in good stead. The same capacity of grasping the heart of a subject makes the Italians felicitous caricaturists. Most are attached to some special journal and do their work under pseudonyms. Perhaps the most vigorous are Galantara of the *Asino*, who flagellates social conditions with mordant satire, and Augusto Majano, the political caricaturist of the *Resto del Carlino*.

Nowhere has the new spirit shown more vitality and impetus than in the domain of sculpture, that apparently most stationary and tranquil of the arts. Here again it manifests itself in a marked striving to emphasise individualism, and also in the desire to cause this art to lend itself to the awakening of the social conscience. An exponent of this bent is Ernesto



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Biondi, whose "Saturnali," now in the National Gallery of Rome, was judged too strong meat for the American public, and its exhibition was prohibited. Here is veristic plastic with a vengeance, acute physiological and psychological perception, and a subtle satire that, under cover of an antique dress, reads a lesson to our modern *jeunesse dorée*. Enrico Quattrini was also for many years ignored until he won the competition for the statue of "Justice" and the decorative group of "Justice between Force and Law" destined to surmount the fine new Roman Palace of Justice. He is a decorative artist in the fullest sense of the word, with a leaning to the best decorative motifs of the seventeenth century. A promising sculptor is Arturo Dazzi, who came in a strong second in the competition for the Altare della Patria won by Angelo Zanelli. Among the Neapolitans, who in sculpture too are true to their native vivacity and exuberance, a high, if not the first, place would have belonged to Vincenzo Gemito, who received his baptism of glory from Meissonier—had he not unhappily lost his reason. Among young Sicilians, Giovanni Nicolini deserves favourable mention, who, long under the imperious influence of Rodin, has emancipated himself and found his own style. His monument of Crispi

at Palermo and his bronze group "The Mowers," the property of the State, are both pervaded with a social spirit. Francesco Clusa, the Sardinian, has successfully introduced modern Italian art to the sons of his fascinating, mysterious isle, with its crimes, its vengeance, its hot-blooded passions. Maccagnani dedicated much of his talent and his time to the monument to Victor Emmanuel, working beside its originator, Sacconi, helping to model the plastic portions with an elegance truly Hellenic. Of his decorative faculty he gives evidence in his group "War" for this same monument and his "Fame" for the Palace of Justice. In Lombardy men like Troubetsky and Quadrelli have greatly helped forward the sculpture revival, the former ever occupied with reproducing the expression of movement in his spirited animals; the latter in his attempts to reconcile the decorative with a truly sculptural sense of repose. And side by side with these worked in Piedmont the three men who really emancipated Italian sculpture from its academic swaddling-clothes and prepared it for the new spring that has now dawned—that is to say, Calandra, Bistolfi, and Canonico. The restless audacities of Medardo Rossi also contributed their quota to the rousing of the public

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from its indifference, for it must be admitted that sculpture, too, had fallen upon evil days. First, the baneful influence of the Academicians, then the so-called naturalists, who threw overboard every tradition under the pretence of a more direct rendering of nature, caused a vulgar and superficial art to triumph. This was the more to be regretted because Italy was engaged in erecting statues and monuments to the heroes of her resurrection, and with results too often deplorable from the standpoint of art.

To the direct and indirect influence then of the men just named—true pioneers—Italy owes younger men like Libero Andreotti, the author of nervous, Tanagra-like figurines of modern life, admired by critical Paris; Livio Tofanari, the sculptor of wild animals, who earned well-merited laurels at the last Venice Exhibition; Michele de Benedetti, the creator of a violinist now in the Gallery of Modern Art at Rome; Alimondo Ciampi, the able pupil of that refined and really great sculptor, Treutacoste,—to name but a few at random.

But all are eclipsed and surpassed in promise and in achievement by the sculptor whose name three years ago was practically unknown, and who is now an Italian glory. For the general public

was unaware that he had already won a student's prize with a frieze representing "Labour," a task he carried out in two episodes of work in the fields and work at the quarry. This was followed by a seated half-length erected to Gasparo da Salò, the seventeenth-century lutist, the inventor of the violin, by his native townlet, a work that vibrates with concentrated sensibility. About the same time (in 1908) Zanelli received an order from an American to decorate for him a classic funereal temple which the young architect Marcello Piacentini had designed. Zanelli elected to make a frieze running all round the cella, and in this frieze, enclosing over one hundred figures, he was able to give free rein to his imagination, following the classic usage of honouring death as a lyrical representation of life. The result is a splendid apotheosis of life, sane, vehement, and victorious. While he was still at work on this frieze the competition was announced for the frieze that should decorate the so-called Altare della Patria that runs round the pedestal of Victor Emmanuel's equestrian statue. It only occurred to Zanelli to compete three weeks before the term for presenting the models expired. As usual with him when working, he shut him-

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self away from all contact with the outer world, and till he presented his sketch no one was aware of its nature. The adjudicating committee, to their eternal honour, as one man, unanimously gave the commission to Zanelli, though quite unknown to all. In twenty-two months he was ordered to present his sketch in plaster in its ultimate proportions. In less than seventeen he had completed his task—no trifling achievement, seeing the size of the colossal bas-relief and the number of figures it contains. Zanelli has understood as no other that the Altare needs to be a synthesis of the whole monument, and that to attain this it is needful to have recourse to symbolism, a symbol, however, that shall speak plainly so that all can read it and comprehend. His frieze glorifies the virtues of the Italian people, which he bases on labour and love of the Fatherland—the two traditionally Italian virtues. He causes them to move in ordered procession towards Rome, the constant desire and aspiration of the national soul. The whole, thus conceived, is a dignified poem, adumbrating poetically and ocularly the splendid historical moment it commemorates for to-day and for posterity.

Architecture has not kept pace with the sister

arts of painting and sculpture, but the Third Italy can point with justifiable pride to at least one notable architectural achievement in the really impressive and dignified national monument at Rome, nominally to Victor Emmanuel, but really to the memory of her resurrection as a nation. Unfortunately, Count Giuseppe Sacconi did not live to finish it, and left his plans too incomplete, so that much had necessarily to be changed and modified by other hands. Hence the work is not entirely homogeneous, but now that it stands practically complete on the flanks of the Capitol, and dominating the Eternal City, even the foreigner, who is prone to depreciate every expression of the new Italy's artistic activity, is forced to concede that this monument, whose inspiration derives from Greek harmony and Roman love of grandiose splendour, is an imposing fabric that synthesizes the solemn significance of patriotism understood in its widest and sublimest interpretation.

The Italians have always been keen theatre-goers, and their actors have always been distinguished. Nor have they declined in this respect. It is true that, as in other lands, there has been a great tendency to adapt to the native stage the plays of France, and in some respects,



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even those of England. It may, for example, be affirmed that *Charley's Aunt* is as popular in the Peninsula as at home; and recently Bernard Shaw has found appreciation, thanks to the sympathetic translations of Signor Antonio Agresti. But with the national revival there has made itself felt a desire for national plays, and there has been a reaction against French dramatic works, notwithstanding their lively dialogue and ingenious plots. The Italian playwrights are more versatile. They deal with other human passions besides the amorous, as is right and proper if the stage is to hold up the mirror to life. The chief exponents of this department of dramatic writing are still Bracco, Butti, and Traversa, all three past-masters in the delineation of soul dramas, in the building up of attractive plots; but none of the three can be justly classed as belonging to the generation that is coming on. This generation has produced, however, one playwright who has leaped suddenly into well-merited fame. And this is Sem Benelli, dramatist and poet; for his plays are mostly written in verse, which all Italian actors know how to speak, a rare accomplishment not possessed in such measure by the actors of other lands. In Italy's Jubilee year of 1911, Benelli earned for





ANGELO ZANELLI,  
Italy's greatest Sculptor.

himself fresh laurels with two tragedies, *Il Mantellacio* and *Rosamunda*, that Rosamunda, the wife of Albion, the founder of the Lombard Dominion of sixth-century Italy, whose cruel fate has inspired yet other poets, among them Alfieri and Swinburne. In detail and in mass Benelli has contrived to give a lurid, vivid picture of barbaric life and of the Longobard conquest of Italy. In *Il Mantellacio* Benelli also treats of an historical theme, a Florentine subject dealing with the company of poets opposed to the academic school of singers. This, however, met with a more limited success, being considered too lyrical for a stage drama. Perhaps his best play still remains that which literally took Europe by storm—*La Cena delle Beffe*. Here the mediæval Florentine environment, with its ferocious hatreds, its pitiless vengeance, its atrocious crimes, is reproduced with a skill rarely equalled by any other dramatic artist. Indeed, Florentine themes attract him;—perhaps because he is himself a Tuscan;—for he has returned to them in the *Maschera di Bruto*, where the protagonist is the Lorenzino dei Medici who assassinated that weak, vicious Alessandro, in whom the older branch of the Medici clan became extinct. *L'Amore dei Tre Re* is based on a mediæval legend of the

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year 1000, and is perchance the least successful of Benelli's dramas. But always and ever his language is terse and pointed, his diction noble, even if now and again too ornate ; wherefore his work will live, not only as a simple literary phenomenon, but also as a notable example of that which Young Italy can produce. His are true Italian plays, which owe nothing to French influences.

Here again, in order really to touch the national soul, we have to turn to the dialect theatre, for, though Paris is France, Rome is not Italy. Regionalism in this respect fortunately has not died out of Italian art. Each city has its own character, as it has its own dialect and its own idiosyncratic public. On this account the recent reawakening of the dialect theatre is noteworthy as perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon of this beginning of a new century, though of course it must never be forgotten that Goldoni, the greatest master of Italian drama, was in all respects a dialect playwright. From this dialect theatre it is hoped may develop the national theatre, the real Italian theatre so ardently desired. Among the principal dialect authors who have triumphed in Italy during the last few years the first place perhaps belongs to Salvatore di

Giacomo, that artist in words and writer of true poetic feeling, whose one-act play *Mese Mariano* is a *microcosmos* of concentration and suggestion. Again, in his *Assunta Spina*, the tragic story of a Neapolitan ironer, we once more laugh and weep at the same moment, for di Giacomo knows how to touch and tickle in one breath. Luigi Capuana's Sicilian plays have become familiar outside Italy, thanks to the overwhelming art of Giovanni Grasso. Amelia Rosselli, who some years ago won with her vigorous *Animao* the competitive prize of the Dramatic Society for the best play offered anonymously, has achieved a new success with a play in Venetian dialect, *El Refolo*, which means a sudden gust of wind.

In a lecture dealing with contemporary Italian music recently given in Paris by the French poet Paul Millet occurred this passage: "Happy the land whose musicians express the correct ideas of national genius and press ever forward guided by the inspiration that gushes from the inexhaustible springs of the race." Certainly, within recent years the musical life of Italy has shown increased energy in all its branches. The theatre still continues the goal to which the greater number of young musicians aspire; opera has always



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been the form that corresponds best to the genius of Italian composers. Those masters who were already to the fore ten years ago have continued to write for the stage, such as Mascagni, Puccini, Ciordano, Leoncavallo, etc. At the same time, younger men have come to the front, and special mention must be made of Giacomo, Riccardo, Storti, Zanella, Santoliquido, del Valle, Ferroni, Luporini, and above all, Wolff-Ferrari of Venice. What is new, however, is that of late years the young musical school of Italy has turned its attention with enthusiasm and success to chamber music, and especially to its symphonic branch, which in former times had notable masters in Italy, but of late has been neglected. The impulse in this direction was given some time ago by Giovanni Sgambati and the late Giuseppe Martucci. To-day many young composers dedicate their talents to this noble elevated branch, proving that it is not foreign, as was once supposed, to the Italian nature and genius. The most notable composers of this class of music are Enrico Bossi, who, besides being an eminent organist, has also written beautiful organ and church music, and also music for the pianoforte and orchestra ; Edgardo Del Valle de Paz, professor of piano-playing and author of compositions



THE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO VICTOR EMMANUEL I. IN ITS PRESENT STAGE.

When complete, two magnificent four-horse chariots in gilt will adorn the top corners.



for that instrument, distinguished for elegance of form and grace of inspiration ; while Wolff-Ferrari, already named, also composed sonatas, quartettes, and symphonies. Ildebrando Pozzetti, nicknamed Ildebrando di Parma by d'Annunzio, for whose " Nave " he composed the music, is one of the most ardent followers of the new tendency in musical art. Leone Sinigallia is better known outside of Italy as the writer of inspired and genial, important instrumental works, especially for the violin, also for his " Danze Piemontesi," an overture to the " Baruffe Chiozzotte," etc. Besides these, there are Guido Alberto Faon, a composer and director of merit, Amilcare Zanella, an excellent pianist, writer of much chamber music, and director of the Liceo Rossini of Pesaro ; Gino Bellio, Esposito, Falconi, Parodi, and yet many others who are worthy of mention for their vocal and instrumental compositions.

Examining synthetically the tendencies of the young Italian musical school, stress must be laid on the circumstance that it aims at a greater nobility and severity of style and an increased elaboration of form. The days are ended of light soulless tunes, of easy melodies, of careless form. There is to-day in Italy a far higher conception of music than existed formerly, taste has become

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refined, and the science of harmonics and counterpoint is more diffused. On this account, even among those modern composers whose flights of imagination are not of the highest character, their music is pervaded nevertheless by a dignity of form and conception and an attention to proper harmonisation and instrumentation that was entirely lacking formerly. In these later years musical history has been much studied from its aesthetic and critical side, and there is now manifest in these studies, which till recently were very superficial in Italy, an extreme care in the examination of documents, and in drawing conclusions, and an acuteness of investigation that is remarkable. Largely instrumental in obtaining this result has been the Associazione dei Musicologi Italiani, founded in 1908, which aims at cataloguing the whole musical patrimony stored in public and private libraries, in the archives, the churches, the convents of Italy, and also is beginning to publish some of the most remarkable productions of the old musical art, thus exhuming many ancient *Capilavori*.

## CHAPTER X

### NATIONALIST ITALY

NATIONALISM, as a broad principle and not a narrow, political creed, has come to be recognised as a driving force in Italy to-day, and it has played no small part in the recent stirring events. It might almost be said that the people yet only half-consciously appreciate the bigness of this force, which in the Jubilee of United Italy shook the country from the torpor which had succeeded the exhausting struggle to free itself from the Austrian yoke, and roused it to some realisation of its responsibilities and opportunities. In some other countries Nationalism stands for reaction, the people's patriotism is exploited for party purposes, and what should be an accelerating movement is but a clog on the wheel of progress. But the Italian Nationalism, while it has not escaped the suspicion that it would eventually prove to be no better than the reactionist Nationalism of other



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## CHAPTER X

### NATIONALIST ITALY

NATIONALISM, as a broad principle and not a narrow, political creed, has come to be recognised as a driving force in Italy to-day, and it has played no small part in the recent stirring events. It might almost be said that the people yet only half-consciously appreciate the bigness of this force, which in the Jubilee of United Italy shook the country from the torpor which had succeeded the exhausting struggle to free itself from the Austrian yoke, and roused it to some realisation of its responsibilities and opportunities. In some other countries Nationalism stands for reaction, the people's patriotism is exploited for party purposes, and what should be an accelerating movement is but a clog on the wheel of progress. But the Italian Nationalism, while it has not escaped the suspicion that it would eventually prove to be no better than the reactionist Nationalism of other

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old Irredentists that the flame of Nationalism was kept alive. Seemingly impossible as the dreams of these irreconcilables were, their very persistence served to keep in mind among the whole Italian nation what their nationhood had cost them, and how jealously it must be guarded. When the last great division of the earth was made, there was shown then as little regard for the rights of smaller peoples as there is to-day, and the Trentino was handed over to Austria without so much as a "by-your-leave" to the Italian population. Six years later, after much fighting, Trent was captured by the Italians, but in 1813 it was again handed over to the Austrians, who have kept a tight grip on it until this day. Garibaldi might have regained the Trentino for Italy when he was about the whole business of uniting his country, but his famous "I obey," when he was ordered to desist, ended any hope of redemption by resort to arms.

Since that date, however black the Austrians endeavour to paint the case against the Irredentists, there has been no definite agitation of a separatist kind, although, of course, the Italians, who saw their language and nationality being threatened by the wave of Germanism, never ceased to dream of a day when they should be





FRANCESCO TEDESCO,  
Minister of the Treasury.



PROFESSOR SCIPIO SIGHELE,  
President of the Nationalist Conference.

joined to the Fatherland. They merely agitated for an autonomous administration, such as is allowed to other nationalities forming the "mosaic" of the Austrian Empire. They were tied to the Tyrolese in the Diet at Innsbruck, who have never failed, because of their superior number, to tyrannise over the Italians. And it made matters no easier when the Trentino members withdrew from the Diet for a time in protest. In 1874 Austria promised them a separate Diet, and the promise was often repeated; but it has never been fulfilled. And insist as they might by all legal measures—for the laws allow them to foster their own language—they have had to submit to one long series of persecutions at the hands of the Tyrolese, who, intense Catholics as they are, have thought to serve the Church by persecuting the Italians. The same thing has happened in Trieste, Istria, and Dalmatia, only there the pressure comes from the Slavs, who subsidise several active societies, of which the leading one is the Santi Cirillo e Metodjo.

In 1886 the Pro Patria Society, which was permitted by the constitution of the Empire, was founded by the Italians for the purpose of defending their language and culture by the



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establishment of schools and kindergartens. The progress of the Society was rapid, and its objects found ready support throughout Italy. In one year there had been established 64 groups. In 1890, however, the Society was dissolved quite unexpectedly by order of the police. Petty persecutions followed. Giuseppe Borghetti, who had been editing an Italian newspaper in the Trentino for many years, and had been most scrupulous to spare the susceptibilities of the authorities, was suddenly ordered to leave the country, and his paper was confiscated. The reason given was that in one issue, in speaking of the Emperor, he had a small "i" for Imperatore, while he had used a capital "R" in speaking of the King of Italy! The matter was brought up in the Italian Parliament, but the reply, of course, was that the Italian Government had no jurisdiction outside its own borders. The Irredentists were ever a troublesome thorn in the side of the Italian Government, who, out of regard for their Austrian ally, had always to scold and condemn the aspirations of these exiled Italians. Great difficulty was experienced in getting a Dante monument erected in Trent, but the strength of the support that was forthcoming from the Italian nation, organised and stimulated by Pasquale

Villari and Roggiero Bonghi, overcame the Austrian objections. Villari once declared that the Germans were only doing their duty in trying to Germanise all the peoples within their borders, and it was the duty of the Italians to imitate them if they were not absolutely indifferent to their own Fatherland and their own race.

As a lineal successor to "Pro Patria," the "Lega Nazionale" was founded in 1892, with a federation of societies from the five Austro-Italian provinces of Trentino, Trieste, Istria, Friuli, and Dalmatia. Its avowed object is the upkeep of the Italian language and civilisation in provinces which for twenty centuries were Italian. The local groups are under the control of a central authority which fixes its headquarters alternately in Trent and in Trieste. After ten years' work, the League had 21 schools and subsidised 8 more, besides 131 groups and 24,000 members, with property estimated at 400,000 kroner. After twenty years they own 74 scholastic institutions besides the important boarding-school of Nicolò Tommaseo at Zara, 136 other schools are subsidised, 153 libraries have been established, 250 University and secondary scholarships founded; there are 177 local groups, with 40,000 members, and property

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of over 1,000,000 kroner. The League claims to have united the Italians in these separated territories in one bond of sympathy and love of Fatherland, in which political and religious differences are forgotten. It claims to have no ulterior political motive in its propaganda, and that its every act is open ;—its only purpose being to act as a loyal and legitimate guardian of the Italian language, and to hold high its standard of civilisation ;—and that it is not only sanctioned by law, but by a sense of ethnical and ethical justice.

Another powerful Nationalist institution, the Dante Alighieri Society, was founded more than twenty years ago, principally for the purpose of keeping in use the language of the divine Dante among emigrants abroad, but also to see that it should not be subverted by other languages in territories that were ethnographically Italian. The Society calculates that there are about 6,000,000 Italians abroad who may be termed temporary emigrants. Of these, there are 170,000 in Algiers and Tunisia, 2,000,000 in North America and 3,000,000 in South America. In 1910 the Society had a yearly membership of 55,000, besides a large number of life members and an income of 400,000 lire, which

has been augmented by legacies. There are 212 local committees in the Kingdom and 73 abroad. They have infant-schools in Marseilles and Toulon, and emigrant secretaries in all the important ports to look after Italian immigrants when they land. They have promoted libraries, schools, social institutions, and lectures, and have in other ways sought to promote the material and moral well-being of Italians abroad. In the books they issue, they seek to keep the love for Fatherland a living force, and do everything they can to prevent the Italians and their language being assimilated by other peoples and lost to the homeland. The good work being done by the Society has been recognised by the Government, and among the people generally it is a firmly established institution.

In 1903 another society, the "Trento and Trieste," was founded, and in a letter to Professor Villari, the President of the Lega Nazionale, Signor Bruno Canera di Salasco pointed out that the new Society was not to compete with the League, but, seeing that the League occupied itself with the Italian peoples all over the world, the need had been felt for a more concentrated organisation, confining its work strictly to Austrian Italy. But great as is the work being

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done by these societies, it is more than swamped by the Pan-German societies in Austrian Italy, the chief of these being the "Schulverein." These societies have in the Trentino and Trieste districts alone a membership of 230,000, and an income of 1,600,000 kroner. The work they do is five times more than the Italian societies can do, although in the Trentino only 5,000 out of 350,000 inhabitants speak German or German dialects; and with plenty of German capital for schools, libraries, recreation-rooms, and social equipment, they win the Italians over, of course, in large numbers. Even patriots cannot withstand the temptation of first-class educational equipment for their children. The Austrians have not adopted the dragooning methods of the Prussians in Poland, because it would be unprofitable; but in Dalmatia Italian families are not permitted, even at their own expense, to employ for their children, teachers who have taken their certificates in Italy.

The matter of University education is a great grievance among the Austrian Italians. Every year there are nearly a thousand students who wish to pursue higher studies, but they are obliged either to study in Germany or take degrees in Italy which Austria will not recognise.

Over and over again the Government promised them a University at Trieste. The best substitute the Italian students in Innsbruck could have was a series of lectures by Italian professors, and some of Italy's leading men gladly went to Innsbruck to deliver these lectures. But the authorities got uneasy about it, and instigated persecution, the German students availing themselves of their impunity to make life a burden to their Italian fellow-students. In November 1903, de Gubernatis had just mounted the platform to give a lecture on the harmless subject of "Petrarch," when the room was invaded by police with fixed bayonets, followed by German students with staves. The sequel was twenty Italian students wounded, the lecturer just managing to escape to the railway station, and 100 Italian students imprisoned. That was the end of the lectures in Italian. In Vienna in 1908 there was a similar episode, 2,000 other students, assisted by fifty gendarmerie, "beating up" 290 Italian students. The demands for an Italian University were renewed, and at last a Faculty of Law at Vienna was promised; but even that has never materialised. At times the authorities have become panic-stricken, and the most petty persecutions have



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followed, such as, for instance, the refusal to allow the Italian gymnastic club in Trieste to hold its exhibition because there were said to be bombs about the place! As recently as January 27 of this year Senator Guido Mazzoni was to give a lecture to the Italian students at Trieste on "The Students of the Middle Ages." The police demanded to see the lecturer's manuscript beforehand, but this was refused, for the good reason that there was none, and as the Lega Nazionale would not make themselves responsible for any rioting that might take place, the lecture was prohibited. There is no doubt as to the spirit entertained by the majority of Austrians towards Italy.

In view, therefore, of this wave of Pan-Germanism, which threatened not only to Germanise Austrian Italy, but to spread itself right along the Adriatic, there were many Italians, especially among the younger men, who did not place much faith in benevolent societies for protecting their nationality. Parliament was moribund, and when it was not engaged in squaring its own petty, personal squabbles, it was—such was the charge against them—being led by the peace-at-any-price people, who openly declared that Italy had nothing to do with

affairs outside her own borders. Foreign policy was non-existent, except a cap-in-hand attitude towards Germany and Austria, which culminated in the acquiescence without compensation in the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Young Nationalists, as they called themselves, could stand this condition of things no longer. Several most able writers started the journal *Il Regno*, in which, although no very positive ideas were put forward, there appeared the most scathing attacks upon the Parliamentarians, attacks which very often lost their force by the virulence of their language. But it was plain that there was a revolt afoot, and its unceasing criticism undoubtedly livened up things in the most high places. The scattered forces of discontent were finally brought together into the Nationalist Association, the few isolated organs were merged into *L'Idea Nazionale*, which soon had an extensive circulation, and the Nationalists set to work to outline a definite, positive policy; for the greater part of the criticism levelled against them was that they did not seem to know what they were driving at. Rising young writers and men of already established reputation joined the movement, among the chief of them being Enrico Corradini,

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M. Maraviglia, Scipio Sighele, Giulio de Frenzi, F. Carli, Luigi Villari, M. P. Negrotto, G. Castellani, and Goffredo Bellonci. In the words of one of them, the Nationalists set out to discover the great heroic Italian soul, which they believed not to be lost, but only overlaid.

"The stormy petrel of Nationalism" is Enrico Corradini, journalist and novelist, whose name is truly a household word. He first gave voice to the new movement in his novels, although he denied any political intent. His "*La Guerra Lontana*" deals with the Abyssinian campaign, and Italy's disgraceful acceptance of the defeat of Adowa without insisting on the *révanche* necessary to restore her prestige. The *Times*, in speaking of this novel, said: "Certain passages rise high above the average level of modern fiction; the account of the effect which the news of Adowa produced in Rome is terrible in its tragic poignancy; to Italian readers it is heartrending. To have written such a book implies moral courage and patriotism of no mean order, as well as literary power. There is no doubt that the author is coming to be a real force in modern Italy." But Corradini was not content to write novels. From South America he had sent stirring letters home urging the

necessity for arousing national feeling among the emigrants in distant lands. And then, last year, he went to Tripoli, from whence he sent letters to the home journals describing what he saw; how the remains of Roman civilisation stirred him to anger against an Italian Government which seemed quite content to allow the land of his forefathers to remain in the hands of the Turk. He sought to make the Italians realise that their plain duty was to go to Tripoli without delay, if Libya, as well as Tunis and Morocco, was not to be lost to them.

Corradini has also written a great deal on the need for a quickening in Italian life by the development of a real Nationalist spirit. He contends that just as there are proletarian classes, there are proletarian nations, nations in a condition of inferiority. Italy is a proletarian nation. Her emigration figures alone prove this; she provides the working proletariat for the whole world. Nationalism, he believes, will rouse her from this servile state, but she must pursue a policy of "nation," just as the Socialists pursue a policy of "class." The Socialists are rousing the proletariat to class-consciousness; Nationalism must rouse Italy to nation-consciousness. She must develop a combative spirit; what she

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wants is a tonic, and a war would do her health good. Corradini does not beat about the bush ; he insists in plain language that "unless Italy has a war, she will never be a nation." To that end, and in order that preparations might be made for it, the Nationalists were willing to make a "truce of God" with all internal factions, even with the Socialists. The peoples who have become nations have become so through a war. "Just as Socialism has redeemed the proletariat, so Nationalism will be our method of redemption from the French, German, English, North and South Americans, who are our bourgeoisie. Just as the methods of Socialism were strife, and they looked to the general strike to emancipate them from exploitation, the methods of Nationalism must be war, or the preparation of themselves for war. Nationalism was but the logical outcome of Socialism. The Nationalists took up the struggle where Socialism left off. But, of course, their purpose was a greater one ; instead of a class, they thought of the whole nation ; instead of the bourgeoisie, the world."

This was a novel kind of logic to be hurled at a go-as-you-please people, who affected to treat the whole thing as a joke, or at best as the "hot air" of a few young "bloods" whose

brains would get cooler as they grew older. But there was a refreshing breeziness and vigour about the way in which the Nationalists carried on their propaganda, and the theories they propounded; and they showed no sign of abatement of enthusiasm because there seemed nobody ready to put up a fight against them. They knew that their biggest enemy was apathy, the indifference of the majority of Italians as to what happened to the country so long as their own individual careers and comforts were not interfered with. In season and out of season they hammered away with speech, newspaper, and pamphlet; and were naturally delighted when the Socialists here and there showed fight, because it set the common people listening. They declared that the Internationalism of the Socialists was the rankest anti-patriotism, and ridiculed the philosophy which sought to make out Socialism as the purest of love for the Fatherland. In some instances the ardour of the combatants led them to blows; and there were "shindies" in which an Irish Nationalist would have gloried. The more responsible people in the land began to sit up and take notice; and by the time the Nationalist Conference was held in Florence, a large number of prominent public men, while



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declining directly to associate themselves as Nationalists, because of the suspicion that it was a party game, openly endorsed the principles enunciated.

Professor Sighele, "the philosopher of the movement," dealt in several books with the argument, advanced with contempt, that Nationalism is merely "a literary movement." He showed that, while preparation and intellectual incubation are necessary for the birth of every vital political movement, the coincidence sometimes happens that the thought of a few suddenly finds itself in unison with the sentiment of the people. For Nationalism this coincidence took place three years ago; and Sighele narrates how, at the end of 1908, Austria tore up the Treaty of Berlin and annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. He charged Tittoni, then the Minister for Foreign Affairs, with committing a crime against Italy in appeasing her natural outburst of anger by exaggerated promises of compensation which never materialised, and which he knew would never materialise. This was the culmination of a series of renunciations which had for years humiliated Italian diplomacy. But out of this humiliation came a reaction of courage and the dawn of a national conscience. "A man had fallen, but a nation had risen." The

intuition of the people found itself in complete accord with the meditated theory of the Nationalists, and the propaganda of Nationalism began to flourish.

Several incidents occurred in Parliament to show how the influence of the new thought was spreading, speeches being made by Alessandro Fortis, Barzilai, and Enrico Ferri, men widely separate in political thought, all voicing the great need for Italy to assert her nationhood. Barzilai's forceful arguments won many to the support of increased armaments ; and Ferri, pacifist as he was, declared that the destiny of the country depended upon the character of the influence it could exercise outside its own confines. Italian Socialism, he urged, must shed its antiquated ideas and, like German Socialism, reconcile love to its country with love to humanity in general. As Sighele put it, the attitude of the Italians has been one of abject gratefulness to other nations for allowing them to live, and what base ingratitude it would be for them to think of lifting up their eyes from their own country ! Far better be silent and work at home, with no higher ambition than perhaps to surpass the Swiss as hotel-keepers ! " No," he insists, " Italy must be Imperialist in order to prevent the closing up of

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all those openings whence the nation receives its oxygen, to prevent the Adriatic from becoming more and more an Austrian lake, to prevent even the Mediterranean from being closed around us like a camp guarded by hostile sentinels, and to provide a field of activity for our emigrants wherein they will enjoy that protection which they now lack, and which can only be provided by a bold foreign policy, a thorough preparation for war, and a clear Imperialist attitude on the part of the rulers of the State."

Two currents were distinguished by Professor Sighele in the early stages of the movement. A number of men were Nationalists for æsthetic rather than for practical reasons ; their Nationalism was a literary and aristocratic phenomenon—a classicism. They dreamed of Nationalism and Imperialism as one dreams of perfect works of art. The other school was composed of solitary men of science, who, with a more realistic sense of life, urged a vigorous propaganda to regain for Italy her pride and force, so that she could not only correct her badly defined confines, but expand where other nations were encroaching with less right than she had. The first school was Conservative-Imperialist, while the second was Democratic-Irredentist. But at the Conference all suggestions



LUIGI FACTA,  
Minister of Finance.



THE MARQUIS OF SAN GIULIANO,  
Foreign Minister.



of party demarcation were entirely obliterated ; the delegates' enthusiasm for their common grand idea drowned all the miserable little political differences. It was inevitable, Sighele argued, that in the beginning Nationalism should take an anti-Austrian attitude, but later on it would have to renounce that for a fuller policy ; the Nationalists would have to interest themselves in the affairs of the Italian subjects distributed all over the world, and infuse into them pride in the position their country occupied in the eyes of the world and in the work it was accomplishing. " The Italians do not possess a collective, national conscience, and the formation of this conscience must be the first aim of Nationalism."

It was Giulio de Frenzi, a Bolognese journalist on the staff of the *Giornale d'Italia*, who took the first step towards putting Nationalism on a practical basis, and the first Conference, held in Florence a year ago, was attended by several hundred eager, enthusiastic men, over whose often very heated deliberations presided Professor Sighele. Naturally, such a Conference excited the widest interest, and its discussions were reported at considerable length in all the leading newspapers, which had begun to pat the young men on the back, and were read with an avidity for which the piquant



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disputes were not alone responsible. The people were realising that there was "something doing." If they had never realised it before, they were now made to feel ashamed of the servile attitude adopted by Italy in her foreign affairs; they were told that the contempt openly displayed for their country in diplomatic encounters, even by Turkey, was due to the fact that they had no army or navy powerful enough to win that respect which was necessary to successful diplomacy. The Triple Alliance was, metaphorically speaking, torn to shreds, and shown up as a thing which was chiefly responsible for Italy's degraded prestige, and each one of the Foreign Ministers who had had the misfortune to succeed Crispi was subjected to a "wiggling." Even San Giuliano did not escape scot free. Why did he tolerate the truculence of the Turks and pursue a timid policy which would end in Tripoli being as lost to the Italians as Tunis? If he were persuaded by some of the speakers, he would go to Tripoli at once, and make no bones about it. They would only have to sound the Italian trumpets and the walls of Tripoli would fall down. In this respect, as events have shown, they were lamentably out of reckoning. The ardent Nationalist journalists who had been to Tripoli to spy out the land had

got the impression that a handful of troops would accomplish all that was necessary, that the Arabs were longing to fall on the necks of the Italians as brothers, and that the few thousand Turks would readily quit, glad to be rid of a troublesome responsibility. Such were the exaggerations of the ease with which Italy could make a colonial conquest, into which the Young Italians were led by their impatience. It was fortunate for Italy that Giolitti, San Giuliano, Spingardi, and Cattolica, knew their business better ; but in their delightful impartiality and irresponsibility the Nationalists "lambasted" right and left without fear or favour, without respect of persons. Corradini, in one of his books, demands : "When our generation shall be in power, shall we know how to make good the errors of the past ? For the present we are obliged to go about the world with blushes on our faces, ashamed for that which has been committed, and afraid for that which may be done. We have become a laughing-stock. People have dared to cover with infamy the beautiful body of Italy because we have been left in the hands of antique Ministers, without souls, without hair, and without teeth ; in the hands of a lot of dirty bureaucrats covered with dust and ink, whose sole anxiety is to lay their hands upon booty."

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The speakers at the Conference were particularly severe upon the peace-at-any-price policy. They handled the subject of war with their gloves off. Without signifying any particular enemy, they insisted that a war was necessary to save the soul of Italy. Sighele quoted Anatole France, a Socialist, who had declared "*Supprimez les vertus militaires, et toute la société civile s'écroule.*" War was the author of virtues impossible to peace, a condition of life necessary to national progress: "My country right or wrong." The citizen's first duty was towards his own country; his duty towards humanity took second place. "We wish that the idea of war should enter into the spirit of the people," urged Maurizio Maraviglia, "because we know that to overburden ourselves with armaments is not sufficient to avoid it, and still less to win it. To desire war sometimes means winning without fighting; not to desire it means fighting against our own will or losing without striking a blow; to educate the country to the sentiment of war does not mean that we should provoke it at all costs—it merely means that we must create a state of mind and fact such as will enable the Government to conduct its foreign policy without misgivings, in the certainty that other countries

will feel convinced that our international activity will never be arrested by the necessity of having to accept or declare war."

The crisis of 1908 was fixed upon by de Frenzi as the point of departure towards a sane foreign policy. It was then that there sprang up in the national conscience an aspiration to become a military force; they realised that until they became one they would never be respected. Although they had a bad fall through Tittoni's weakness over Bosnia and Herzegovina, the spirit displayed by the people of Italy put an end once for all to Germany's dictatorial attitude. And he insisted that the stronger Italy became in arms, the more she would be respected. On the chess-board of the Balkans they had always been checkmated by Austria, either directly by her pressing towards the *Ægean*, or indirectly by her pretending that it was Turkey who desired to disturb the already unstable equilibrium of the Adriatic. It could not be denied that the political interests of Austria and Italy in that quarter were irreconcilable. The aggravation of the peril of the Italian position by the great activity of innumerable Austrian agents in Albania rendered it imperative that Italy should take a firm stand in the matter, and by the increase of

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her armed forces let it be known that this policy could not be pushed very far. There was not the slightest reason in the world why Italy and Austria should not be on good terms with each other—nay, it was to their common interest; but good relations were only possible when both sides respected each other. Italy could tolerate a policy of deference and loyalty, but not of servility.

Naturally, the new movement developed a distinctly anti-Turkish tendency, the more so as it became obvious that the hopes, entertained by Italy as well as by the rest of the world, that the Young Turks were seriously bent on reform, had been shamefully betrayed. Of course, the Italian Foreign Office was perfectly well aware of the way things were drifting, and thoroughly cognisant of Turkey's dealings with Germany; but the Nationalists chafed against the Turkish insults to Italian prestige, and did not hesitate to give the Foreign Office a piece of their mind. Far from resenting this, the Foreign Office was gratified, because in so far as the Nationalists were expressing the public will they were only supporting the Government's policy, which of course could not be wrecked by too precipitate action. The charge against the

Government, that it feared to alienate its Socialist supporters by seeming to favour territorial expansion, was absurd ; but any stick was good enough to beat the Government with when the country was inflamed against Turkey.

The *Panther* precipitated matters, and the Government recognised its opportunity ; but while, in the light of history and the Government's astonishing preparedness, it cannot be denied that the Nationalists had a great deal to do with ripening public opinion on the matter, it is obviously too much to claim that they alone are responsible for Italy going to Tripoli. Naturally, when the war had broken out, it brought about a state of public feeling which was fertile ground for the propaganda of Nationalism, and the subsequent rise in Italian prestige gave the new movement plenty of reason for saying : " Didn't we tell you so ? " The Nationalists have undoubtedly done the country good, and there is nobody more gratified than the heads of the Government for the stirring up of the dry bones of Parliamentary life. They know better than anybody else how difficult it is to get any consecutive work done with the numerous incongruous elements constituting Parliament, the harmonising of which, although absolutely necessary if anything is to



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be done at all, absorbs so much of the time and energies of responsible Ministers.

With the reawakening of the national spirit there came a greater regard for Italy's children across the seas, and so much attention is now being paid to their welfare that the emigrants are being called "spoiled darlings." That so many Italians should be obliged to go abroad to earn their daily bread has not been an absolutely dead loss to the Fatherland, as we have seen from the savings they send home, and the progressive spirit they bring back with them when they return; but it has been a great loss nevertheless. And not long ago Italy gave the Argentine Government a very sharp lesson for not seeming to appreciate the sacrifice that the homeland was making in sending millions of her sons to build up the Argentine. It was one of the biggest shocks that the South American Republic could have, when, in return for their hectoring, Italy promptly shut down the supply of labour, without which Argentine crops would have been in a pretty pickle. Needless to say, the Republic was quickly brought to its senses, although, like every other nation, it had never dreamed that the meek and submissive Italians were capable of such a national temper and will.

The Foreign Office, in a scheme recently outlined and sent out to all the "Chancelleries" and all the Consular Agents abroad, is extending this policy, which has come to be known as "Italianitā." Not only is a numerical census to be taken of Italians abroad, but a complete record is to be prepared of their economic condition; the influence they have in the countries where they live, both as workmen and as capitalists; what part they play in politics; the state of their education, and how it compares with the education of the people they live among; what facilities they have for social life; thrift societies, charities, savings'-banks, co-operative societies, libraries, schools, and gymnasia; in fact, particulars as to every phase of their lives, and as to what terms they are on with the nations amongst whom they dwell. When completed, the Government at home will be able to estimate approximately what part Greater Italy is playing in the world, and will be the better able to carry on the propaganda of "Italianitā," and to ensure that the language and culture and the lives of the emigrants may not altogether be lost to the mother country. Italy's biggest export is labour, and she is going to see that this export is marketed to the best advantage. In the future, it is not going to

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be the "cheap Dago labour" it has been in the past. With the revival of self-respect at home, the Italian abroad is also going to demand respect, and if the foreigner wants his labour he will have to pay a fair wage, especially now that Italy has a colony of her own, promising recompense for honest toil. That is the meaning of Nationalism so far as the sons of Italy abroad are concerned. In the homeland Nationalism means that Italy has again discovered her soul: that she is realising anew the grandeur of the ideal which inspired Mazzini and Cavour, and inspirited Garibaldi and the liberators who fought for a free Italy. It will be a great pity if that ideal is degraded into a mere party cry and is besmirched in the muddy pool of politics.

## CHAPTER XI

### ITALY AND EUROPE

ITALY is now destined to play a bigger part in European politics. It is generally agreed that she has achieved an extraordinary rise in prestige by her Tripoli expedition ; that she is in a fair way to becoming a World Power. Not only has she developed self-respect, but she has compelled other nations to respect her. She is being wooed on all sides. Whereas in October every man's hand was against her, to-day her praises are sung in Britain, France, Germany, and even Austria. They are all saying that "they told you so," and are competing with each other in the discovery of new and wonderful traits in the Italian nation which will operate for the good of humanity. There never was such a paragon of virtues. Her surprising financial recovery, her rapid industrial and agricultural development, her efficient army and navy, were not surprising after all—they

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were to be expected from such a virile, intelligent people like the Italians !

All this is proving very pleasant indeed to Young Italy, but her flatterers will make a great mistake if they imagine it will turn her head. It is gratifying to have the Foreign Minister of a powerful country paying calls in Rome instead of condescending to a casual rendezvous on the Riviera ; but Italy is making people understand that she is receiving no more than is her due, especially considering the scanty respect she has received in the past. Conscious of the guiding qualities of her democratic King, of the capacity and trustworthiness of her Ministers, and joyously conscious of her new-found strength, she has set her face towards the future, full of self-confidence and faith in her great destiny.

The balance of power is now the chief concern of European diplomatists and the nightmare of Foreign Ministers. One combination of countries has to be played off against another, and, whenever anything happens to upset the equilibrium, Europe is within a few hours of universal war. The lust for aggrandisement of one or two huge military organisations, pushed from behind by the most sordid financial interests, keeps the

whole Continent in a perpetual sweat of fear lest civilisation should be plunged into a welter of blood. The mind reels, the body involuntarily shudders, when the terrible possibilities are comprehended, and one has to keep a firm grip on one's optimism lest fatalistic despair should add to the strong torrent of decadent tendencies.

Willy-nilly, Italy now finds herself irresistibly thrust forward to take a bigger share in the truly awful responsibility placed upon the European Governments. And as much to her own surprise as to the chagrin of some other people she discovers that the whirligig of events, and her resoluteness in playing her own hand in the Tripoli affair, have placed the balance of power very much at her disposal. It is a trying position for a young nation to be suddenly thrust into; it will tax her statesmanship to the utmost, and will demand qualities of which, up to recent days, her statesmen have not shown themselves to be possessed—possibly for the reason that they were not called for. But there is an encouraging amount of confidence in her present leaders which augurs well, and so far they have shown no trace of weakness or of susceptibility to the wiles and cajolery of foreign diplomacy, although this has been redoubled in



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intensity and vigour since Italy has begun seriously to count in the councils of Europe.

The insistent question now is as to what is going to happen to the Triple Alliance, about which Germany, at any rate, appears to have become abjectly alarmed. Italy is in the unusual position, for her, of being able to dictate terms, unlike the time when Bismarck had only to stamp his iron heel to make her come into the Alliance. While she was an undeveloped weakling, without army or navy worth calling such, she was unable to withstand Bismarck's bullying, especially when he found it so easy for him to frighten her with the French bogey. It was a miserable legacy of suspicion and distrust of her Latin sister that the Iron Chancellor left her, and her very weakness prevented her from taking any risks in the matter. To-day the tables are completely turned. France is a tried friend; Germany can browbeat no longer, and has to adopt a pleading rôle; while Italy is in a position to pick and choose. The question as to what her choice will eventually be is probably providing a subject of most exhilarating discussion in the Cabinets of Europe.

There surely never was a greater paradox than the Triple Alliance, but it has been renewed

three times since 1882, when it was formed ostensibly as a safeguard against France on the one hand, and Russia on the other. But it will take longer than fifty years to wipe out the reciprocal hatred between Austria and Italy, and it has always been understood that the latter has renewed her partnership because she desired to be saved from her *friends*. There has always been a great deal of bathos when the time arrives for the renewal of the Alliance, and Austrian Ministers, with hand on heart, have sworn extravagant vows of brotherly love and eternal affection for Italy, but none the less have not failed to strengthen their military hold on Italy's unredeemed provinces. And Italy, on the other hand, put her trust in the providence of the Triplice, but did not forget to keep her powder dry. The position would be Gilbertian if it were not fraught with so much tragedy. All the praiseworthy efforts which have been made by men of peace on both sides have apparently been of little avail: the Austro-Italian frontier has been practically on a war-footing for some time.

Other events besides Italy's exhibition of unsuspected power have been happening during the past few months which have given rise to the alarm for the fate of the Triplice. We now know

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that at the moment when the Italians had their hands full at the beginning of their Tripoli campaign, they were very near being stabbed in the back by their trusted Allies ; and that, but for the will of Francis Joseph, and the strength of his Minister, Aehrenthal, they would have found themselves attacked on their Austrian frontier. The anti-Italian Austrians nearly got out of hand. They received a rude shock when General Conrad was dismissed, but this only added fuel to the flames, and Count Aehrenthal was subjected to attacks which, for virulence and venom, made the contemporaneous attack on Sir Edward Grey seem but a pelting of eider-down—all because, as the *Times* said, “ he has refused to countenance the wild suggestions which have been made that Austria-Hungary should take advantage of the war between Italy and Turkey in order to concentrate an army on the Italian frontier and to engage in an aggressive policy on her account in the Balkans.” It must not be forgotten, however, that the Italian precaution not to weaken her forces on the Austrian frontier and on the Adriatic, while draining the country of troops for Tripoli, but rather to reinforce her garrisons there, may also have contributed towards staving off the Austrian attack.

Of course, it is denied in Austria that there was ever any thought of such a thing, and it is urged that the vapourings of a few jingoes must not be taken seriously; but if Italy did stand in need of any enlightenment as to Austria's real attitude towards her, the campaign to hound Aehrenthal out of office certainly afforded it, and she no longer desires to know why the projected trip of Austrian Liberals to Rome was suddenly abandoned. Count Aehrenthal found it necessary to explain that "our relations with Italy are as unclouded, firm, and friendly as our relations with Germany. Thus it is that the statesmen who guide our foreign policy have nothing to do but strengthen the Triple Alliance. The Alliance, however, can be an efficacious guarantee of peace only when each member of it is completely armed." He did not explain, however, why Italy should find herself compelled to be "completely armed" against Austria, while Italian defences on the French frontier are comparatively a matter of indifference. General von Conrad had declared that the military and naval programme was but a "miserable crumb," and he and his party demanded more armaments against Italy. However absurdly mendacious Baron von Fuchs may be in his

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violent attacks upon Italy, the fact that a former President of the Austrian Chamber, and the leader of the Clericals, did make such statements is not without significance. "As soon as the war in Tripoli is over," he alleged, "the King of Italy will be obliged, by popular hatred of Austria, to make an attack on his Austrian ally, or to go as a 'pensioned monarch into exile!'"

The following account of the activities of the Austrian "war party," from the *Budapester Presse* of January 21, is illuminating: "Nobody knows what the so-called war party aims at, but everybody thinks that it is striving to dissolve the Triple Alliance by a war against Italy, in order to open the way for a new League of the Three Emperors. Why does the General Staff constantly talk of the necessity of war with Italy, especially since the Archduke Francis Ferdinand has taken over almost entirely the supreme direction of the Army? It is no secret that the Archduke has his own politico-military programme, which he consistently carries out. Early last November he made arrangements that must have seemed strange to the Hofburg and to the Ballplatz. Regiments were transported to the southern frontier, though there was no

accommodation for them in the Dolomites, and, notwithstanding the inclemency of the season, officers and men had to be lodged in shanties. Count Aehrenthal made representations to the Emperor, who sincerely desires peace. His Majesty became nervous and called his nephew to account. The Archduke replied by submitting to the Monarch the announcements concerning Italian armaments—and when he had reason to fear that his military arrangements would be hampered he went suddenly to Berlin and poured out his heart to the German Emperor. The latter had been informed of the military movement by Duke Günther of Schleswig-Holstein, who had been travelling in the Dolomites. The Emperor William, who is no longer ‘the sudden,’ and has himself *Thronfolgersorgen*, remained cold, and is said to have dissuaded the Archduke, who returned disappointed from Berlin. At this juncture Count Aehrenthal demanded the retirement of General Baron von Conrad, and, though the Archduke was unable to save his favourite, he succeeded in preventing General von Conrad’s schemes from being completely dropped. The work is being continued by General Schemua, the new Chief of the General Staff. At the moment of Baron von Conrad’s retirement the



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Archduke held an all-night 'council of war' in the Belvedere. The representatives of Christian Socialist organs (anti-Italian Clericals) were received at 4 a.m." No refutation has been made of this exposé, although an interpellation as to the truth of this article was made in the Lower Austrian Diet.

The *Times* Vienna correspondent suggests that the pernicious nonsense concerning an Italian revolution is merely the outcome of cosmopolitan financial resentment of the disturbance of financial interests in Turkey by the expedition to Tripoli. "The Italian people well knows that neither it nor its Government entertains aggressive designs against Austria, and will naturally inquire whether some other purpose than that of the removal of a Minister be not hidden behind the systematic misrepresentation of the position in Italy—misrepresentation carried on, not only in Austrian military and clerical circles, but in financial circles in several countries."

The fear of the Germans and Austrians that Italy may be lost to the Triplice, now that she is worth having as an ally, is leading them into all sorts of avowals. It is explained now that the "coolness" against Italy at the opening of her war with Turkey was due to the fact that they were

at first more apprehensive of the effect it might have upon European peace than of the need for expansion of a people which had refound its youthful virility. This necessity they now fully recognise, and rejoice with Italy in her enhanced prestige. They blame the Irredentists for much of the bad feeling created between Austria and Italy, but admit that the Clerical Germans are exceedingly hostile—"more Papists than the Pope"—and that there is danger from the Austrian military party. Professor Harnack admits that Germany was quite in the wrong in her opposition to Italy's colonising effort, but says that this was because the Germans were absolutely ignorant of the economic progress she had made. There must be no talk of Italy going out of the Triplice, because otherwise she would certainly be attracted to the Triple Entente, and that would render much more dangerous the eventuality of a European war. There are people, not Germans, who take an opposite view to Professor Harnack, but his remarks practically sum up the expressions of the German Press, which in its panic is dropping the "soft soap" argument about how vital it is to Italy to remain in the Triplice, and is trying to impress upon the Germans that the urgent need is their own,

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It is true that the Irredentists are not the negligible quantity they are often made out to be, and that notwithstanding the sternest of reproofs from Giolitti and other responsible Ministers, far from having flickered out, they are a strong and influential force to-day. It is no idle boast that if Italy went to war with Austria right away, there would be half a million ready volunteers. And that, not because the redeeming of Trent and Trieste is considered a vital necessity to Italy, but because the Italians can never forget how much they suffered under the Austrians. The most peaceful of men become bellicose whenever the subject of Austria is mentioned, and patriarchs, too old almost to walk, wax fiery and swear that they would gladly take up a musket to-morrow. It is no cheap jingoism, but a deep-seated feeling which it is impossible to belittle. So that, while officially the Irredentists are often treated as harebrained, and it is recognised that it would be folly to jeopardise Italy's existence as a nation for the sake of a few towns and territory which would prove too costly to keep, there is an undercurrent of sympathy with those who say they can never rest until the Italian flag floats over the Trentino.

But if the Trentino were the only trouble, there

would not necessarily be found any more difficulty than before in renewing the Triple Alliance. The big thing, however, which is threatening Italy is the Pan-Germanic movement, in which, deny it as she may, and insist as she may on her being an independent Great Power, Austria is but the missionary. Contrary to the prevalent idea, it may even be found that on the death of the Emperor Francis Joseph the Germans will not straightway gobble up the German provinces of the Austrian Empire. So long as Austria remains as subservient as she is to-day, there will be no hurry about that. What is of importance, however, is that Austria is preparing the way to Salonika by a process of peaceful penetration—the Balkans are not being gobbled up, but are being slowly but surely masticated. His friendship for Italy did not prevent Count Aehrenthal from pushing his pro-Slav policy, and accelerating the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, although he had to call upon the Emperor William to “rattle his sabre” against Russia. It is no empty boast that Austrian influence in the Balkans is paramount. If it is not paramount, the fault is not Count Aehrenthal’s.

So it is the *Drang nach Osten* movement with which Italy finds herself confronted. She

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encountered it in Cyrenaica, but the seriousness of this peril was nothing in comparison with that which threatens her in the Adriatic, and it is not surprising that her Allies are getting little change out of the Italians for their overtures of peace and goodwill. Italy will require more substantial guarantees than pious utterances, before she will consent to join again what may very well prove for her a smothering Alliance. Commenting upon the German Foreign Secretary's visit to Rome, which seems not to have had a very gratifying outcome for Germany, the *Kölnische Zeitung* says that Italy "will desire the renewal of the Triple Alliance if she can believe that her interest will thereby be served ; otherwise not."

It is utter nonsense to argue that the rendering to Austria of Herzegovina did not affect Italian interests. The Adriatic is Italy's most vulnerable side. Her coast is flat and easy of access, and there are no ports of importance in contrast with the opposite coast, which is lined with natural harbours easy of fortification. Would it still not affect Italian interests if that whole line of coast came into the hands of the Austrians, a contingency not so remote as is supposed? There is no nation more vitally concerned in the

Balkan question than Italy, and unless satisfaction is guaranteed her in this respect, she will most certainly not consent to a renewal of the Triple Alliance.

“ Italy has considerable interests of her own in the Ottoman Empire, both political and economic, to protect,” an Italian deputy urges, “ and these interests, which coincide with the general interests of peace and the international balance of power, must inspire her policy.” There is no need to recall the history of the flourishing Italian colonies on the shores of the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. But it might be pointed out that only a few years ago Italian was the diplomatic language, and the language of commerce and society, throughout the Orient ; while practically all the navigation was in the hands of the Italians, and lawyers and doctors were all trained in Italian institutions. This is now no longer the case, French having supplanted the language of Dante, while German is being encouraged by the Turkish Government ; but in the smaller places the Italian signs are still to be seen, and even the Austrians find it necessary to do their post-office business with the natives in Italian. Until quite recently Italian trade was expanding in the Ottoman dominion more rapidly than that of any



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other country, and there is an enormous scope for it there, once it is given a fair field. But while Italy will be prepared to leave all this out of account, and refrain from pushing what she considers her legitimate claims, if it means further disintegration of the Turkish Empire, she simply cannot acquiesce in any further Austrian aggrandisement.

And thus it comes about that Albania is the bone of contention between these two friends and allies. The possession of that province, so far as will be allowed by its population of picturesque brigands, is considered a necessity by Austria, who, being thrust by Germany towards the Aegean, appears to have no choice in the matter; on the other hand, Italy maintains that if the province is to belong to any but the Albanians themselves, it must belong to her. The Marquis de San Giuliano insisted eleven years ago, that "it is necessary before renewing the Alliance to guarantee for the future our position on the Adriatic," and now that he is Foreign Minister, and that the Balkan question has become more accentuated, it is not likely that he will depart from that policy. In his letters from Albania to the *Giornale d'Italia* he maintained that Italy has "an interest of the first order in

hindering the modification to her disadvantage of the position in the Adriatic, and of the relative strength of her power to that of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. It is desirable for us that the territorial *status quo* in Albania should be maintained as long as possible, until that State is able to become autonomous, which must occur sooner or later when Turkey falls to pieces." Not to secure sufficient guarantees would be to do irreparable damage to Italy in the seas that were once her own. If Valona were to fall into the hands of a Great Power, it would be a greater menace than ever Biserta could be, because it is only forty miles from the Italian coast, situated at the narrow strait which divides the two seas surrounding Italy. Bismarck had suggested that Italy should find compensation for the Austrian advance by the occupation of Tripoli; but San Giuliano contended that that would be a perilous error—their interests on the Adriatic could only find compensation in the Adriatic itself.

Guicciardini, the Italian Foreign Minister in 1901, declared that "whilst Tripoli is a great Italian interest, Albania is an absolutely vital interest of ours. We can never allow Albania to fall into the hands of a first-class Power, and

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we can still less allow it to fall into the hands of a second-class Power which belongs to the political system of a first-class Power. We have tolerated the rise of Biserta, but we cannot tolerate the creation of another Biserta at Valona or at Durazzo." And, on the other hand, of course, it is contended that Austria could under no circumstance consent to an Italian occupation of Valona, because it would nullify Trieste; and even if Austria were inclined not to trouble about Albania, Germany would forbid anything which would depreciate the port which she has for years considered as her own door into the Mediterranean.

Matters approached a crisis in 1908, when the late Sultan granted a concession to Austria for the construction of a railway through the sanjak of Novi Bazar from Uvatz to Mitrovitza. "The proposed line would have linked up the Austrian and German railway systems with Salonika, the finest port on the Ægean; it would have intersected all possible lines of communication from the Albanian ports to the East; and if this subsidiary scheme of a railway down the coast from Cattaro were realised, the whole province of Albania would have been dominated and ultimately absorbed by Austria,

The Adriatic would have become an Austrian lake, its keys held by an Austrian naval base at Valona, commanding the straits of Otranto." The revolution in Turkey put the scheme on the shelf, but the Italian resentment had not time to quiet down before the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina roused it again. However, the Italians had no means of making their objections felt beyond that of angry demonstrations; their military weakness, especially on the Austrian frontier, was such that, had war broken out, "less than a week would have seen the white-coats at Milan."

It is a never-failing source of surprise to Italians to observe the cool way in which the *welt-politik* writers, and, following them, the diplomatists, go on apportioning the earth. No regard is apparently paid to the smaller countries except when the exigencies of the big empires demand some sacrifice from them. Sir Harry Johnston, for instance, while graciously allowing Italy to have Libya, tells her that she must not be greedy; she has really been given as much as she is entitled to. He writes in the *Nineteenth Century*: "The Italians had legitimate reasons for objecting to any Germanisation of the Tripolitaine, and took the only course they

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could to prevent it. This being the case, they have no justification, either geographical or political, for any interference with Austrian or with German ambitions with regard to the Balkan Peninsula or the Nearer East. Italy has got the utmost share to which she is entitled in this slowly dissolving Empire of Turkey. Therefore, it is extremely improbable that Great Britain or France would actively intervene to prevent the Germanising of Trieste, or to aid Italy in any scheme she may still cherish regarding the future of Albania." And, of course, that seems to settle it. If the Italians had listened to Delcassé a year or two ago, they would have gone straight to Albania, and would have left Tripoli to be looked after by France. But if the Powers have learned anything from this present campaign, it is that Italy can no longer be treated as a *quantité négligeable*; that she demands to have a say in this chopping up and changing of the earth, where it especially and vitally concerns herself.

However, both in Italy and Austria there is a strong body of opinion that it would be the best thing for both sides that they should neither of them lay hands on Albania—the game would not be worth the candle. It would cost millions of money

and hundreds of lives to subjugate the Albanians, who are nothing more than heroic savages, poor but proud, and who do not want to be governed by anybody. They object to the making of roads and say they simply do not want to be civilised. And as for any economic value in the possession of Albania, there is none ; it would be dear at any price. It is urged therefore, in Italy, that everything should be done to ensure the future independence of the Albanians, " who may constitute a potential bulwark both against Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism."

Unfortunately, however, it does not lie in Italy's power to control the destiny of the Balkans ; she has realised to her cost that the Triple Alliance affords her very little protection in the Adriatic. Austria has been unable to proceed as rapidly as she desires because of her financial worries—French financiers are waking up to the folly of lending Austria money to buy armaments, eventually to be used against France by Germany—but the *Drang nach Osten* movement was never more active than it is to-day. It is not for nothing that the Kaiser is keenly interested in the Bagdad railway, and there is more method than madness in his declarations of affection for the Sultan of Turkey.



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There cannot possibly be the slightest doubt about Italy's desire to maintain the *status quo* in the Balkans, and it is even suggested that that was her concern when she allowed the Turkish fleet to regain the Dardanelles after it had been entirely at the mercy of the Italian men-of-war. Count Aehrenthal's own testimony was that "the Italian Government, from the outset of the war, declared publicly and unequivocally that it desired to follow a political principle, tending to maintain the *status quo* in the Balkans. Italy's attitude has been in conformity with this resolution." But how long can Italy maintain that attitude, if, under the cloak of integrity, the German peaceful permeation continues to obstruct Italian interests? We know that Italy has favoured the idea of forming a federation of the Balkan States, and that the King of little Montenegro has dreams of becoming the head of it. But even this scheme must meet with Italy's strongest disapproval, if the federation is going to come under German influence. Montenegro has been forced to borrow from Vienna, as a consequence of the last Albanian revolt, and it is certain that the favourable terms which have been granted involve definite political obligations.

Under the circumstances, therefore, the hardy

annual, "Trouble in the Balkans," is likely to arouse more than ordinary interest this year. All accounts from trustworthy sources agree as to the combustible state of affairs. As the *Times* remarked, "the advent of spring has seldom been more dreaded than this year in the Balkans." The Young Turks have proved more reactionary than the old Hamidian régime, and have pursued their policy of "Ottomanism" to the extreme. The forces which were supposed to be working for progress in Turkey have proved a fraud, and "giving the Young Turks a fair chance" has only been a miserable excuse for not interfering. The Powers are well aware that internal conditions in the Ottoman Empire are no better than they were; that the growth of Turkish armaments is not only intended to deal with enemies from without, but also to crush the life out of any movement for liberty within. What could be expected from a Sultan who mocked the Powers with the sinister remark that "the continued existence of the Armenians was the clearest proof that they enjoy security"? Repression by wholesale massacre has been abandoned for a time, only because violation was considered an even more effective method of exterminating a people. "By an organised system of outrage it was determined

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that no Armenian woman should become the mother of an Armenian child." Yet there are now no Exeter Hall meetings to crush the "bloody Turk," and Macedonia may keep on crying, but it will avail her little ; the humanitarians are now lavishly bestowing their affections on the oppressor.

Is it any wonder, then, that these persecuted peoples have grown contemptuous about the benevolent pretensions of the Powers, and are going to take things into their own hands again ? What means all this elaborate drilling and equipping of large armies in the Balkan States, if it is not to counteract the enormous military preparations being made by Young Turkey ? It is very significant that Roumania and Bulgaria have patched up their differences, and if, as is not improbable, war does break out this year, what will the attitude of the Powers be then ? Will it be any different from what it has been in the past ? Will the mutual hatreds and jealousies, aggravated by the big empire schemes, no longer be an obstacle in the way of helping these provinces to drive the Turk out of Europe ? And, if the Turk were driven out, would the Powers still guarantee the integrity and independence of the Balkan States ? The answer to all this is very

doubtful. One authority's prophecy is that "the probable outcome will be the creation of a number of semi-independent States—Albanian, Turkish, and Macedonian—united in some loose confederation with Austria, and consequently with Germany." Hence it would be suicidal on Italy's part to affect indifference as to the fate of the Balkans. Her very existence as a Power, her own national independence, her opportunities for natural development and expansion, would be placed in jeopardy on the day another Power got control of the Adriatic. And her neglect to go to Tripoli would have been the first serious nail in her coffin.

Italy, however, does not need to be told that her position in the Triple Alliance is an illogical one, and she certainly appraises German and Austrian assertions of loyalty at their true value. But the fact remains that she is on far better terms with Britain and France, and, not unnaturally, speculation is rife as to whether Italy will not find herself obliged to renounce her allegiance to the Triple Alliance, and transfer her power and prestige to the Triple Entente. There is already a strong current of feeling in that direction, but of course no official notice can be taken of it. However desirable such a change

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may be, Italy cannot stultify her presence in the Triplice by making open overtures towards an understanding with the Powers of the Entente. There is good reason for believing that, notwithstanding the peculiar behaviour of some of her English "friends," Italy would heartily welcome an invitation from Great Britain to come into the Entente; but she may not say so, however great her longing. *Il faut toujours y songer mais jamais en parler.* People may be left to draw their own conclusions as to the effect such a consummation would have upon international affairs. But could it have any other than a beneficial effect?

For one thing, there could be resolute action taken by England, France, and Italy to end the intolerable state of affairs in the Ottoman Empire. Turkish rule is beyond all hope of reform, even if the Turks sincerely desired it, because Mohammedanism renders reform not only impossible, but a crime against religion. No help could be expected from Russia, who, however, has too many other irons in the fire to venture much opposition. It would content her to see the Pan-Germanic wave checked. Opposition would undoubtedly be offered by Germany and Austria for divers reasons. The latter Govern-

ment is frantically anxious about the maintenance of the European *status quo*, and could not conceal its glee when the holding up of French mail-boats by the Italians caused a little irritation between the two countries. Certainly, Germany and Austria are not blind to the direct possibilities of a *rap-prochement* between Italy and France and England and sigh for another Iron Chancellor who could set them by the ears again. But if concerted, drastic action were taken by England, France, and Italy, the problem of the Near East might be solved for good; and most assuredly Italy would be the gainer.

Meanwhile, the enhanced prestige of Italy, gratifying as it is, devolves upon her grave responsibilities, if she is to be true to herself. With all the desire in the world to live on good terms with the other Powers, and especially with Austria—the recent censorship of d'Annunzio's "Ode to the Dardanelles" showed to what extent the Government will go in this respect—the unstable equilibrium of Europe gives her no alternative but to go on strengthening her army and navy. She could not help being drawn into the vortex of contending military forces; she had either to sink or swim. She preferred to swim, because she believes she has a destiny



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to fulfil. It has been the fashion to point to the Triple Alliance as the cause for her heavy expenditure in armaments. This is quite true; but not exactly as the critics have meant it. The armaments have not been needed for fighting the foes of Germany and Austria, because none of these foes have threatened Italy, but simply as a safeguard against her very allies. We now know that her proved strength and efficiency as a fighting force have made her for the first time really valuable to Pan-Germanism as an ally, or rather as a pawn, and formidable as an enemy. Hence the German tears and fears.

If Rome really did again aspire to Empire, who should say her nay? Her young men may dream of it, and who shall deny them? Are they less fitted for Empire than the French, the German, or even the British? But the French and the German and the British need not get very alarmed—Italy is exceedingly modest in her claims. She stands for the right of a compact, well-defined nation to develop herself to her fullest capacity; the right to defend herself when her natural development is in danger of being arrested by outside forces. She stands, indeed, for nationhood against an all-absorbing Imperialism, and her foreign policy, her alliances,

and ententes will be dictated directly according to that idea.

Above all, Young Italy stands for the intellectual side of things. In all those fields of thought which make for the uplifting of humanity from the cockpit of contending greed and aggrandisement she is opening out new and brighter paths. Having surveyed the apparently hopeless chaos into which the world is being irresistibly drawn, cynics may sneer at this young nation's pioneering pretensions; but it is irrefutable that there are elements in the new Italian nationality of which the world stands sorely in need; and in judging of Italy's present and future actions those people who are genuinely concerned for progress, and have not allowed themselves to be swamped by the prevailing pessimism, must face squarely the question whether these elements are worth preserving; whether the world will not be lamentably the poorer if they are crushed at their birth by the Juggernaut of a military and financial despotism. The optimists who believe that such nationalities are worth preserving must sympathise with Young Italy's efforts to secure her own development, and rejoice in the grand opportunities presented by her growth in prestige. Whatever may be her

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shortcomings—and they are many; whatever blunders she will make—and her very youth will be responsible for not a few; there are thousands of lovers of this country who believe with Israel Zangwill that “of all the nations Italy is the least unfitted to lead the world.”

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